

THE MARRIAGES OF THE BOURBONS.



E. Favy.

LOUIS XIV. BIDS FAREWELL TO MARIE DE MANCINI.

THE MARRIAGES
OF
THE BOURBONS.

BY
CAPTAIN THE HON. D. BINGHAM.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
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To the Honourable Mrs. Albert Grassey.

PARIS, 16 Sept., 1889.

MY DEAR MAUD,

ALLOW ME TO DEDICATE 'THE MARRIAGES OF THE
BOURBONS' TO YOU, A PORTION OF THE WORK HAVING BEEN
WRITTEN UNDER YOUR HOSPITABLE ROOF.

YOU WILL FIND NONE OF THE ROYAL ALLIANCES WITH
WHICH I HAVE DEALT AS HAPPY AS YOUR OWN, AND THAT WILL
CONSOLE YOU FOR NOT WEARING THE PURPLE,

YOUR EVER AFFECTIONATE UNCLE,

D. BINGHAM.

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ERRATA.

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Page 67, line 9, *for geology read genealogy.*

„ 77, „ 20, „ Jean „ Jeanne.

„ 158, „ 3, „ Beran „ Bearn.

MARRIAGES OF THE BOURBONS.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON MATRIMONIAL ALLIANCES IN EARLY FRENCH HISTORY.

THERE had been a considerable amount of rivalry for more than a century between the kings of France and England, and especially between Philip Augustus and Richard Cœur de Lion. At last, in the spring of 1200, Richard being dead, negotiations were opened between King John and the French monarch for the conclusion of peace. Among other articles there was one ~~which~~ set forth that Louis, the son of Philip, should marry Blanche of Castile, daughter of Alphonso VIII. and of Elenora, the sister of the King of England. King John agreed to give his niece, by way of dowry, all his possessions in Berri, and a sum of 20,000 marcs in silver. It is supposed that this dowry was merely a pretext for concessions which it would have been repugnant to the feelings of the British monarch to have made in any other way, and

repugnant to the feelings of the British people to have sanctioned.

It has been remarked, that the marriage of Blanche de Castile was a strange combination, being the result of a treaty not with Spain, but with England. The ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of Bordeaux, at the rendezvous of the two kings in Normandy, on the 23rd of May, 1200.

In 1193 Philip Augustus, his first wife being dead, had demanded the hand of Ingeburge, the sister of the King of Denmark. By way of dowry, the Danes were to help the French against the English. The demand of the French king was received with favour, and Philip Augustus went as far as Arras to meet the bride. The marriage was celebrated at Amiens. The princess is said to have been lovely and virtuous, but for some reason, which has always remained a mystery, the king, on the day of his wedding, conceived an invincible aversion for his wife, and at once determined upon a separation. A servile assembly of bishops and barons was convoked at Compiègne, and, on the ground of relationship between the two parties, pronounced a divorce. The queen refused to submit to this decision, or to return to Denmark, but retired into a convent in the diocese of Tournai. The King of Denmark appealed to the Court of Rome, and the Pope threatened Philip Augustus with all the thunders of the Church, in case he carried out his project of espousing Marie de Meran. In spite of bulls and legates the marriage took place. The Pope annulled

the divorce, and excommunicated the French king, who revenged himself on Ingeburge, had her arrested, and shut up in the castle of Etampes. After a violent and obstinate quarrel, Philip was obliged to give way, to promise that he would take back Ingeburge, and that he would drive Marie de Meran from the kingdom.

“The Church in the middle ages,” says Sismondi, “always showed great indulgence for the tyranny, perfidy, or cruelty of kings; these she considered as venial sins not to be brought under her jurisdiction; but she constituted herself the strict guardian of marriage. . . .”

Once reconciled with the Pope the French king made war with England, and one of the results of this war was the Great Charter forced by the barons on King John. In quick succession came other events, such as the battle of Bouvines, the crusade against the Albigeois, and the offer of the crown of England made by the barons to Louis the son of Philip Augustus, an offer which was accepted in spite of the remonstrances of the Pope. Louis landed in England, and was recognized in London and throughout the greater portion of the kingdom, but after the death of King John he soon found himself obliged to conclude a truce with Henry III. The troops of Louis were defeated at Lincoln in May, 1217; a fleet which his wife sent to him met the same fate off Dover in the following June, and in September, in virtue of a treaty, he left our shores.

Here then we see two matrimonial alliances—that contracted by Philip Augustus with the daughter of the King of Denmark, with the view of attacking England, and that contracted by his son Louis with Blanche of Castille, with the view of consolidating peace with England.

In 1223 Philip Augustus died, and was succeeded by his son, who reigned in France as Louis VIII. for the space of three years, a debilitated Lion, as he has been called.

Louis VIII. died in 1226, leaving behind him five young children, the eldest of whom was afterwards known as St. Louis. For the moment, Queen Blanche acted as Regent, and before long she thought of marrying her son, at the time eighteen years of age, to Margaret, the daughter of the Count of Provence. She accordingly sent Giles de Flagéac to the Count of Toulouse to exhort him not to slacken his persecution of the Albigeois, and secretly commissioned him to visit Provence, and see if Margaret would be a suitable daughter-in-law for the Queen of France.

The report of De Flagéac was favourable, and Louis and Margaret were married at Sens in May, 1234. The husband was nineteen and the wife thirteen years of age. "The queen mother," says Sismondi,¹ "charged herself with the task of preventing them from living together until they grew stronger by years. Margaret did not have a child until she had been married for six years, and even then the Queen

¹ Sismondi, *Histoire des Français*, t. 7, p. 136.

Blanche kept a close watch upon the domestic life of their majesties. Jealous of her daughter-in-law, jealous of the influence which she might acquire over her husband, Blanche still endeavoured to keep Louis at a distance from his wife." "The harshness which Queen Blanche exhibited towards Queen Margaret," says Joinville, "was such that the Queen Blanche would never permit her son to be in company with his wife except in the evening, when they went to bed. The residence in which the king and the queen preferred to live was at Pontoise, where the king had a room up-stairs, and the queen a room down-stairs, which communicated by a turning staircase, where they could converse together. They ordered the ushers when they saw Queen Blanche approaching the chamber of the king her son, to strike the door with their rods, and then the king ran into his room, so that his mother might find him there; and the ushers did the same thing when Queen Blanche went to see Queen Margaret. Once when the king was with the queen his wife, and when she was in great peril of death, owing to a bad confinement, Queen Blanche came and took her son by the hand, saying, 'Come along; you have nothing to do here.' When Queen Margaret saw that the king was being taken away by his mother, she cried, 'Alas! will you not let me see my lord dying or living?' and then she fainted, and they supposed that she was dead; and the king, who thought that she was dying, returned, and it was with great trouble

was taken that she should be accompanied by a strong escort, lest the French should be tempted to snap her up. She was married to the Emperor Frederick II. at Worms, in July, 1235."

In addition to these royal marriages several matrimonial alliances were formed among the great vassals—alliances which led Mathieu Paris to say in his *History of England*, p. 349—"Several magnates were indignant that this kingdom of kingdoms, called France, should be governed by a woman; and those who rose up against this state of affairs were grave and famous men, skilled in the use of arms from their youth, to wit—the King of Navarre, Comte de Campagne, the Comte de la Marche, the Comte de Bretagne, and several other great lords, who are bound together by a federation and by an oath." And, we may add, who were in league with the King of England.

In August, 1270, the best of the Capets died in his camp near Carthage, and several of his family were attacked by the disease which had proved fatal to the king. One of his sons, the Comte de Nevers, preceded him to the grave. His brother, the Comte de Toulouse, his son-in-law, the King of Navarre, and many of his chief barons succumbed shortly afterwards, while there was little hope that his eldest son Philip, who now succeeded him, would long survive. Before leaving Carthage Philip made his will. He entered Paris in February, 1271, accompanied by five coffins—those of his father, his brother, his brother-

in-law, his wife, and his daughter. A few years later, and we find that of the six sons left by St. Louis only three remained—Philip, Pierre, Duc d'Alençon, and Robert, Comte de Clermont. It was from Robert, the sixth son of St. Louis, that the illustrious house of Bourbon derived its royal title. Robert was born in 1256, and at the age of sixteen became Sire de Bourbon, owing to his marriage with Beatrice de Bourbon, heiress of the rich barony of that name.

CHAPTER II.

ORIGIN OF THE BOURBONS.

As for the origin of the Bourbons, it is enveloped in mystery in spite of the volumes which have been devoted to the subject. According to some ancient authors, it is descended from Witikind, who so long defended his oppressed country against the arms of Charlemagne. Other authorities give the Bourbons the kings of Lombardy, the dukes of Bavaria, or a prince of Saxony for ancestors. Desormeaux tells us that this house had for ancestor Robert le Fort, a prince whose lofty origin is lost in the night of centuries. He adds—

“But; no matter how illustrious the birth of Robert le Fort, did anything ever approach the splendour and glory of his posterity? It is not only to this country that the race of Robert le Fort has given kings, it has filled, and still fills, the first thrones in Europe.¹ At present one counts among his descendants, including Eudes and Robert, who reigned before Hugh Capet, thirty-five kings of France, twenty-three kings of Portugal, thirteen kings of

¹ Desormeaux wrote in 1772.

Sicily, eleven kings of Navarre, four kings of Spain and the Indies, four kings of Hungary, Croatia, and Slavonia, two kings of Poland, one king of Scotland, seven or eight emperors of Constantinople, nearly one hundred dukes of Burgundy, Brittany, Anjou, Lorraine, &c. Several subjects and vassals of the House of France have reigned in England, Castile, Scotland, Armenia, Cyprus, Jerusalem, Naples, and Constantinople: *tu regere imperio populos, o galle memento*. Hence that deep veneration on the part of all the people of the universe for the august blood from which sprang so many sovereigns. Is it a question of marrying Ladislas, King of Hungary and Bohemia? the barons of the two kingdoms throw their eyes upon Magdeleine of France as the most noble match in the universe Charles V. (of Germany), that monarch so powerful and so enlightened, issue himself of so many emperors, counted among his most august titles that of being descended from the first house of the universe through Marie of Burgundy. 'I consider it a great honour,' he said, 'to be descended, on the maternal side, from that *fleuron* which is worn and upheld by the most celebrated crown in the world.'

"But of all the branches of this fruitful tree which has spread its shade over all the thrones of Europe, none has been so fertile in heroes and great kings as that of Bourbon; it is to the Bourbons that France owes all her splendour, success, and prosperity for the last two centuries."

Desormeaux then gives us a short biographical sketch of some of the most remarkable members of this illustrious family, beginning with Robert le Fort, Duke of France, and Count of Anjou, Orleans, and Blois. He earned the name of *Great* and *Machabeus* for having prevented the Normans from subduing the country. He was proclaimed duke in 861, and was killed in the moment of victory in 866.

Robert le Fort married the sister of the Comte de Laon, and had four children—first Eudes, who became King of France, and after having reigned for ten years died without posterity. Robert, his second son, married the daughter of Pepin I., came to the throne in 922, and was killed the year following in battle. Robert was succeeded by his eldest son Hugues, surnamed the Great; he married successively Judith, the niece of King Louis the Stutterer, Ethile, the daughter of Edward, King of England,¹ and Avoie of Saxony, daughter of Henry I., King of Germany; was succeeded by his eldest son, Hugues Capet, who came to the throne in 957, married the daughter of the Duc de Guienne, and died in 996. Hugues Capet was succeeded by his eldest son Robert, who reigned for thirty-five years, married the daughter of the Duc de Provence, and died in 1031. Robert was succeeded by Hugues, his eldest son, who left no heir; and was succeeded by his brother, Henri I., who married Agnes de Rouci, and died in 1060. Henri was succeeded by Philippe I.; then came, in regular

¹ This was Edward the Elder, of the Anglo-Saxon line.

succession, Louis VI., Louis VII.,—whose daughter Marguerite married the eldest son of Henry II. of England,¹—Philippe II., Louis VIII., the Louis IX. who married Margaret de Provence, and had eleven children—the sixth being Robert de France, Comte de Clermont, Baron de Bourbon, de Charolois, Lord of Creil, St. Just, and Gournai, born in 1256, died in 1317.

¹ Henry II. had married Eleanor, the divorced wife of Louis VII., and his son when only five years of age was betrothed to the daughter of Louis when she was only one year old.

CHAPTER III.

GENEALOGY OF THE HOUSE OF BOURBON.

AFTER remarking that it was owing to the total extinction of the direct branch, and of all the collateral branches, issues of Philip the Bold, that the Princes of Bourbon, issues of St. Louis, came to the throne, Desormeaux gives us the genealogy of the House of Bourbon.

We may first of all observe, that Philip the Bold had three sons, and was succeeded by Philip the Handsome, who was the father of the last three kings of the line of Capet—Louis X., Philip V., and Charles IV. When Charles IV. died the French throne was claimed by Edward III., King of England, who had married Isabella, the sister of the three deceased kings. The French parliament, however, founding its decision on the Salic law, gave the throne to Philip of Valois, the cousin-german of Charles IV., and for many a long year the race of Valois ruled in France.

It would be too long and too tedious to wade through all the matrimonial alliances of the prolific Bourbon race with its numerous branches, legitimate

and illegitimate; we shall therefore simply give a sketch of some of the most important marriages which tended to raise the House of Bourbon to the position it acquired, commencing with the sixth son of St. Louis.

Robert de France, Comte de Clermont, born in 1256, married Beatrix de Bourgogne, only daughter and heiress of Jean de Bourgogne, Baron of Charolois, and of Agnes, Dame de Bourbon.

At an early age Robert de France received a severe blow on the head at a tournament, which affected him both physically and mentally for the remainder of his life. He, however, survived this accident for forty years, and died at the age of sixty-one; left behind him six children, and was succeeded by his eldest son, who assumed the style and title of Louis I., Duc de Bourbon, &c., &c.

“No one,” says Desormeaux, “is ignorant of the fact that the posterity of Robert de France and of Beatrix de Bourgogne took the name of Bourbon.”

Louis I. was twenty-seven years of age when he married Mary of Hainault in 1311. On this occasion the prince received from his father the gift of all his property. The marriage was celebrated at Pontoise with great magnificence, in presence of the king and all the court. Louis I. greatly distinguished himself in the field and in diplomacy. The Duc de Bourbon, in fact, after receiving from the hands of King Philip himself the ducal crown as a reward for his courage in battle, was sent on a very difficult mission to

King Edward III. According to Froissart, the duke was accompanied by the Bishops of Chartres and Beauvais, by the counts of Harcourt, Tancarville, and Clermont, and by a great number of lords and knights. "Also, as it was a question of the glory and the most delicate interests of the crown, he took with him the most enlightened lawyers. The Duke met in London the reception due to a grandson of France, uncle of the Queen of England, still more illustrious by his virtue than by the splendour of his birth and his rank. This prince, skilled in the arts of pleasing and persuading, triumphed over all obstacles; he obtained from Edward a solemn declaration by which that monarch admitted that he owed allegiance to the King of France in his quality of Duke of Aquitaine and Count of Ponthieu. . . . The success of this difficult negotiation was hailed with universal applause; it appeared to have removed for ever the clouds of that tempest which threatened both France and England; the rights of the French monarch and the duties of the King of England were clearly defined, recognized, and confirmed."

Like his father, Louis I., Duc de Bourbon, died at the age of sixty-one. Eight children were born to him, and he was succeeded by his eldest son, Pierre I., in 1341.

The House of Bourbon had now acquired such renown that two kings sued for the hands of two of the duke's daughters. "But," as Desormeaux says, "of all these alliances, which give so high an idea of

the power and wealth of the Duc de Bourbon, none pleased him more than that of the Comte de Clermont, his eldest son, with Isabelle de Valois, sister of the king, one of the most accomplished princesses of the century. Perhaps it may not be useless to observe, that the dowry of the sister of the first monarch in Europe was only 25,000 livres; but Charles V., grand-nephew and son-in-law of Isabelle, afterwards loaded her with gifts."

Pierre I. married Isabelle de Valois in 1336. It was thought for some time (ten years later) that he had been slain at Crecy, where he was merely wounded. However, he escaped slaughter at that battle merely to fall afterwards at Poitiers at the feet of the king his master, in the forty-fifth year of his age, leaving behind him eight children.

"The body of the Duc de Bourbon was taken to the Jacobin convent at Poitiers," says Desormeaux, "and there it remained in deposit, as no one dared to render it the last rites. Pierre I., handsome, well-made, brave, and gallant, had carried luxury and magnificence too far; he died overwhelmed with debts and anathemas. To oblige him to pay his debts, his creditors, according to the custom of the time, had recourse, but in vain, to the thunders of the Church; he was treated after his death as a person excommunicated. Perhaps this prince, great-grandson of St. Louis, brother-in-law of the King Philippe de Valois, of the Emperor Charles IV., of the King of Bohemia, father of the Queens of France

and Castile, who died fighting for his country, would even have been deprived for ever of the honours of sepulture but for the piety of his son. Louis II., Duc de Bourbon, only eighteen years of age, hastened to offer to Innocent VI. all his property, in order to satisfy the creditors of his father. It was at this price alone that he could obtain from the Pontiff the revocation of the anathema launched against the author of his existence. . . .”

Jacques de Bourbon, the third son, became Constable of France, and founded the branches of Bourbon la Marche and Bourbon Vendôme, from which descended all the branches of the House of France.

Beatrix de Bourbon, the third daughter, married Jean de Luxembourg, the blind king of Bohemia, who was killed at the battle of Crecy; she received from her husband fifteen silver marks a week to support her dignity. Although she married a second time, she preserved the title and honours of queen.

Marie de Bourbon, the fourth daughter, married Gui Prince of Galilee, eldest son and heir of the King of Cyprus. Left a widow, she married Robert of Sicily, titular Emperor of Constantinople.

Louis II., who succeeded Pierre I., married Anne of Auvergne, a lady who brought immense wealth into the House of Bourbon. He was surnamed the Good, and he died at the age of seventy-three, after having devoted his faculties and courage to the service of his country.

Jeanne de Bourbon, the eldest sister of Louis,

married Charles V. of France, and is said to have been the most accomplished queen who had existed up to that period. Writing on this subject Desormeaux observes—

“It was in the midst of so many disasters that Philippe de Valois, whose throne had for support two sons and four grandsons, lighted for the second time the torch of Hymen. Work, incessant care, grief, and reverses had shattered his mind and impaired his body; but at the sight of Blanche de Navarre, fifteen years of age, he experienced all the flames of love, and kept for himself a princess destined for the Duke of Normandy, his son. If the marriage of this monarch was the work of passion, that of Charles of France, his grandson, with the Princess Jeanne de Bourbon was a masterpiece of wisdom and policy: it gave Dauphiny to France.”

Jeanne de Bourbon, who was united to the heir presumptive to the throne at the age of fourteen years, is said to have possessed beauty, gentleness, modesty, and other virtues, and to have well deserved the love and constancy of her husband, who as Charles V. became the greatest king of the Valois line. It is related that Humbert, the last Dauphin of the illustrious and ancient family of Tour-du-Piu, sought the hand of Jeanne de Bourbon, but he was forestalled by the king, who bestowed the princess upon his grandson. Upon this the Dauphin¹ abdicated

¹ The eldest sons of several great families in France bore the title of Dauphin.

in favour of his more fortunate rival, and buried himself in a Jacobin monastery.

The Queen Jeanne died at forty years of age, after a confinement, to the great grief of her husband, whose health was seriously affected by her loss. "She shared," says D'Orronville, "not only the bed, the table, and the throne of the king, but the duties of government; and," adds the historian, "the genius, the talent, and the prudence of this great queen contributed not a little to the splendour of the reign of the most glorious of the Valois." This splendour "fatigued" Charles the Bad, King of Navarre; he conspired against the life of Charles V. The discovery of his crime cost him dear; the Constable on one side and the Duc de Bourbon on the other fell upon the vast domains which he possessed in Normandy; they seized on his towns, on his treasures; and his children, and deprived him of all the property which remained to him in France with the exception of the town of Cherbourg, which he sold to the English.

Blanche de Bourbon, the second daughter of Pierre I., celebrated by her beauty, her misfortunes, and her tragic end, became the wife and victim of Peter the Cruel, King of Castile. Peter sent an embassy to the Duc de Bourbon to demand the hand of his daughter, and the duke, highly flattered by the proposal, not only consented to the marriage, but gave Blanche an immense dowry. The king, cousin-german of the bride, added a considerable

sum ; she was married as if she were a princess of the blood.

According to Desormeaux the birth and rank of Blanche de Bourbon contributed less to her elevation than her beauty and grace, in which she was superior to all the women of her century. The King of Castile, young, ardent, and intoxicated with passions which the possession of the throne enabled him to satisfy, was madly in love with Marie Padilla. The mother of the king and his guardians thought that Blanche de Bourbon would make him forget his mistress, but in this they were mistaken. The marriage was performed at Valladolid in June, 1353, and is said to have resembled rather a funeral than a nuptial ceremony. Two days afterwards the king returned to the arms of Marie Padilla, and the unfortunate queen was sent to the castle of Arevalo, and placed under the care of the Bishop of Segovia. The indignation of the Castilians reached such a pitch that Peter considered it prudent to take back his wife, but he soon deserted her once more, and never saw her again. Though still in love with Marie Padilla, the king—whose life, ably recounted by Prosper Mérimée, was one long series of crimes—married Juana de Castro, but only to abandon her almost immediately. This new and adulterous marriage raised all the nobility against him, and drew down upon him the excommunication of the Pope. Suffice it to add here, that in 1361 Blanche de Bourbon, one of many noble victims, was poisoned.

by the orders of her husband, and that eight years later Peter was stabbed to death by his natural brother Henry of Transtamare.

In the history of Louis II., Duc de Bourbon,¹ we are told that when Henry of Transtamare came to the throne of Castile, he formed the noble project of driving the Moors from Granada, and that he invited the most illustrious knights of Christendom to aid him; nor did he forget the Duc de Bourbon, whose renown filled all Europe. The duke set out for Castile, and on the road obtained the Papal benediction at Avignon from Gregory XI. He was received with great splendour at Burgos, where five hundred knights went out to meet him; nor were the people ever tired of looking at and admiring the worthy brother of the innocent Blanche de Bourbon, over whose misfortunes and death they still wept. Transtamare displayed great magnificence on this occasion, and it is pretended that this prince carried his courtesy so far as to take the Duc de Bourbon to the castle of Segovia to show him the children of Peter the Cruel, whom he detained as prisoners. "These are the children," he said, "of the man who put your sister to death, and if you wish to put them to death I will hand them over to you." The virtuous Bourbon, we are told, declined to visit the sins of the father upon the children—the children, we suppose, of His Majesty and Marie Padilla.

¹ *D'Oronville*, chap. xxxiii.

Another daughter of Pierre I., Bonne de Bourbon, married first Godfrey of Brabant, son of the Duke of Brabant, but the marriage was not consummated, and Bonne took for second husband the Count of Savoy, surnamed the *Comte Vert*, one of the greatest men of his century, and the founder of the Dukes of Savoy, Kings of Sardinia. This marriage was intended to cement a treaty signed in Paris in 1355 settling the frontiers of France and Savoy.

In *Froissart*¹ we find mention made of the marriage of Catherine, the fourth daughter of Pierre I., who gave her hand to Jean VI., Comte d'Harcourt and d'Aumale. This union appears to have been arranged in order to consolidate peace between the Houses of Harcourt and of Normandy, and to have succeeded in its object.

Jean I. succeeded Louis II. in the year 1410; he married Marie de Berri, daughter of the Duc de Berri, who brought as her dowry the duchy of Auvergne and the county of Montpensier.² Jean had the misfortune to fall into the hands of the English at Agincourt, at which battle all the princes of the

¹ Chap. xciii.

² The marriage of the Comte de Clermont was celebrated in Paris, says d'Orronville, with the greatest splendour. The Cardinal Turcis, Papal legate, pronounced the nuptial benediction in presence of the Kings of France, Navarre, and Sicily, and of the Emperor of Constantinople, Manuel Paleologar. The emperor, who was in desperate straits, had come to France to solicit aid, and Charles VI. had promised him an army with the Duc de Bourbon to command it, but the resources of the country could not bear the strain of another crusade.

House of Bourbon capable of bearing arms were present, with the exception of the Comte de la Marche. We find in Monstrelet that "in this year (1415) Jacques de Bourbon, Comte de la Marche, went to Italy, accompanied by a large number of knights and squires, and married Queen Jeanne, the sister of King Lancelot, and was considered by the inhabitants as King of Naples and Sicily."

Charles I. succeeded to his father, Jean I., in 1433. He married the daughter of the Duke of Burgundy and of Margaret of Bavaria. He had issue eleven legitimate children. The seventh, Marie de Bourbon, married the Duke of Calab'ria and Lorraine; the eighth, Isabelle de Bourbon, married Charles the Bold, the last Duke of Burgundy; the ninth, Catherine de Bourbon, married Egmont, Duke of Gueldres; the tenth, Jeanne de Bourbon, married the Prince of Orange;¹ the eleventh, Marguerite de Bourbon, married Philip II., Duke of Savoy, and bore Louise of Savoy, who became Duchesse de Angoulême, and mother of Francis I.

Charles I. had also many natural children. The

¹ The principality of Orange was founded by Charlemagne, and successively belonged to the house of Adhémar, Baux, and Chalons before it passed to that of Nassau. Carlyle, in his *History of Frederick the Great*, Book xi. chap. v., speaks of Orange as being clearly Prussia's, but lying "imbedded deep in the belly of France," to which country it was ceded by Prussia in 1713. We afterwards find that the Parliament of Paris gave it to the Prince de Conti, a Bourbon. In 1714 it appears to have been annexed to Dauphiny, and when France in 1790 was broken up into departments it was included in the Vaucluse.

eldest, Louis de Bourbon, highly distinguished himself, and became Grand Admiral; the second, Renaud de Bourbon, became Archbishop of Narbonne, and left behind him two natural children, Charles and Suzanne. Charles became Bishop of Clermont, and Suzanne was permitted to bear the arms of Bourbon. The third was Pierre de Bourbon, protonotary of the Holy See, who also left two natural children. Then came four natural daughters—Jeanne, Sidonie, Charlotte, and Catherine de Bourbon. The three first seem to have married well, and the fourth to have become an abbess.

It is related that when Charles I., then Comte de Claremont, was taken prisoner by the Burgundians, he consented to join the enemy in return for his liberty. Upon this *Jean-sans-Peur*, the better to attach him to his party, broke off his engagement with Catherine de France, who afterwards married Henry V. of England, and obliged him to accept the hand of Agnes his daughter. As soon as possible, however, he sent his bride back to her father, and embraced the cause of King Charles VI. Desormeaux says that the Duke of Burgundy offered the hand of his daughter to the Comte de Claremont, but that an offer from so terrible a man was as good as an order. He adds, that the Count had been brought up in the hope of marrying Madame Catherine de France, the prettiest princess in Europe, to whom he was engaged, and that he was obliged to renounce this alliance in order to unite himself closely to a

scoundrel whose audacity he detested. The marriage was celebrated but not consummated, owing to the tender age of the princess.

St. Marthe, in his *General History of the House of France*, says that Charles I., Duc de Bourbon, in the matter of wealth was surpassed only by the King and the Duke of Burgundy, and that "he gave 150,000 crowns to his daughter Marie when she married the Duke of Calabria, heir to the crowns of Arragon, Sicily, Anjou, Lorraine, Bar, and Provence. He treated Isabelle, his second daughter, who in 1454 married Charles the Bold, then Comte de Charolois, and who afterwards became Duke of Burgundy, with no less magnificence. This opulence on the part of a prince burdened with a numerous family gives one a high idea of the manner in which he managed his affairs. This is all the more worthy of notice because the dowry of the ladies of France (*id est* princesses of the blood) was fixed at 100,000 crowns."

Jean II. succeeded Charles I. in 1456. He was surnamed "the Good," and the "Scourge of the English," having helped to drive them out of France. He married first Jeanne de France, daughter of Charles VII. and Marie d'Anjou; second, Catherine, daughter of the Duc d'Armagnac; third, Jeanne de Bourbon, daughter of Jean de Bourbon, Comte de Vendôme. These were brilliant alliances. Strange to say, Jean II. left behind him no legitimate offspring, but five illegitimate children, the eldest of whom earned the nickname of the Great Bastard,

and died in 1505 "with the reputation of a hero."

History relates in detail how disturbed was the kingdom of France in the middle of the 15th century, and how by means of artifice and corruption the astute but unscrupulous monarch Louis XI. won over most of the discontented nobles to his side. Among these was Jean II., Duc de Bourbon. According to the chronicles of the time, the king received Bourbon in Paris with honours, caresses, pardon, and gifts; everything was lavished upon him. "For the last nineteen years the duke had been wedded to Madame Jeanne de France and had no children; he looked upon the sire de Beaujeu¹ less as a brother than as a son. The king offered him the hand of his eldest daughter for the young prince; but the alliance could not be then concluded, as the princess was only six years of age. Louis XI. then proposed a match between his eldest legitimized daughter, Marguerite de Valois, and Louis de Bourbon, the natural son of Charles I., Duc de Bourbon, and the natural brother of Jean II. The marriage was celebrated in Paris with royal magnificence, and the king heaped honours and wealth on the happy pair. It is said that nothing flattered Jeanne II., who was devoted to Louis de Bourbon, more than this alliance.

The widow of the Constable (Jean II.), Jeanne de Bourbon-Vendôme, would have been Queen of France, says Desormeaux, if beauty and love could have worn

¹ His brother Pierre.

the crown, Charles VIII. being so struck by her charms that he wished to marry her. It was even settled that the wedding should take place at Moulins; but his mother had another match in view of greater utility for the State, and the engagement with Jeanne de Bourbon was broken off. By her marriage with the Comte d'Auvergne Jeanne had two daughters; the eldest married the Duke of Albania, and the second Laurent de Medicis, Duke of Urbino, and had issue the famous Catherine de Medicis, "who did so much harm to France, and especially to the House of Bourbon."

Jean II. was succeeded in 1488 by his brother, Pierre II., to whom we have already referred as the Sire de Beaujeu. Pierre had married in 1474 Anne de France, the daughter of Louis XI. and of Charlotte of Savoy. Pierre had only one male child, who died in his cradle, and one daughter, Suzanne, who married her cousin, Charles de Bourbon. With Pierre II., therefore, the eldest branch of the house of Bourbon came to a close.

Desormeaux says with regard to the marriage of Pierre II. with Anne of France, "On his return to court the Comte de Beaujeu¹ was received by the king with the most lively demonstrations of joy and affection; his misfortunes and his dangers had rendered him still more dear to Louis XI., who regarded him with the feelings of a father; he adopted him as his son by uniting him with his eldest daughter, Anne de France.

¹ The count had suffered imprisonment on behalf of his sovereign.

“Beaujeu was all the more affected by his happiness, as he had long despaired. We have seen how, after the treaty of Conflans, Louis XI., standing in need of the support of the Duc de Bourbon, had promised him his daughter for his eldest son; but other times, other interests. The king, who was never ‘the slave of his word,’ forgot his promises; he offered his daughter now to the Duke of Burgundy, now to the Duke of Guienne, again to the Duke of Calabria. The Sire de Beaujeu opposed patience and submission to the caprices, to the policy, and to the absolute will of the imperious monarch; he continued to serve him with the same zeal and the same courage; he shared all his labours and his perils, and he renounced, by order of His Majesty, the hand of the Princesse Marie d’Orleans. . . . Louis XI. had the mortification to see all his schemes for the marriage of his daughter fail. The Duke of Burgundy preferred Margaret of York, the sister of Edward IV., King of England; the Duke of Guienne never thought of any one but the heiress of Brittany; nor would it have been a crime on the part of the Duke of Calabria to have entertained the same views had he not behaved towards Louis XI. like a corsair rather than a prince. He abandoned Anne de France, but kept the large sums which he had received from the king as an advance on her dowry.

“On comparing the conduct of all these princes with that of Beaujeu, Louis XI. appeared to be touched by his modesty, his reserve, and his wisdom;

he might have placed madame (Anne de France) upon one of the most brilliant thrones of Europe, but he could not consent to part with this princess whose beauty, grace, wit, and virtue developed themselves every day. He therefore fixed his eyes irrevocably upon the Comte de Beaujeu, whom he destined to become the support of the throne; it is pretended that the disorder of his domestic affairs contributed not a little to his marriage. The Comte had dissipated the greater portion of his patrimony, and was reduced to that state of indigence and distress which Louis XI. desired in princes of the blood, so that he might keep them in humble dependence. Besides this, the king, after his usual custom, corrupted his own gift; he exacted from De Beaujeu, in consideration for so great an alliance, that he should consent to the reunion of all the domains of the House of Bourbon to the Crown if he died without having any male heir by madame. . . . Louis XI., by a trick worthy of him, refrained from being present when the contract was signed, to avoid the reproach of having by his presence obliged his son-in-law to sign a clause so detrimental to the fortunes of his house."

On the other hand we are told, that the Comte de Beaujeu was too intelligent not to know that it was out of his power to sign away the rights of the Montpensier branch. Also that of all the advantages he reaped from his marriage—gifts, honours, command, &c., nothing flattered him so much as the possession of a young, lovely, talented, and virtuous princess.

Louis XI. had six children, three of whom survived him—Charles VIII., his successor; Anne, his eldest daughter, who had married Pierre de Bourbon; Sire de Beaujeu, and Jeanne, who married the Duke of Orleans, grandson of the brother of Charles VI., who afterwards became Louis XII. When Louis XI. died, Charles VIII. was thirteen years of age, and had consequently almost attained his majority; his father, however, thinking him incapable of reigning, confided his son and the government of the kingdom to the care, not of Pierre de Bourbon, but to Anne, who, as Brantôme says, “was as clever and subtle woman as ever lived, and in everything the true image of her father, King Louis XI.” Certain it is that the Duchesse de Bourbon, who continued for some time to act as Regent, obtained for France the peaceful acquisition of Brittany, by bringing about the marriage of her brother Charles VIII. with Anne, the heiress of that duchy,—no very easy task, as the Comte Darie relates in his *Histoire de Bretagne*.¹ When Anne was but four years old her hand was promised to Edward, Prince of Wales; but two years afterwards, in 1483, the unfortunate young prince was assassinated. The number of Anne’s suitors rapidly increased. There were Alain, Sire d’Albret, called the “Great,” because he was reckoned the richest nobleman in the kingdom; the Vicomte Jacques de Rohan, and the Archduke Maximilian, who sent the Count of Nassau to Brittany, where he married the young princess for his

¹ Tome iii. p. 82.

master by proxy. As Guizot says—"This strange mode of celebration could not give the marriage its real indissoluble character; the anxiety of France, however, was great. The engagement of the young duchess was no secret in Brittany; she already assumed the title of Queen of the Romans. Charles VIII. loudly protested against this pretended marriage, and in order to give more weight to his protests, sent ambassadors to Henry VII., who meddled much in the affairs of Brittany, to expose to the English monarch the rights possessed by France to oppose the marriage of the Duchess with the Archduke Maximilian." In the end, what between force and persuasion, Anne consented to marry Charles VIII., and thus Brittany was annexed to France. According to the Venetian ambassador, Contarini, Charles was small, badly made, had an enormous head, large colourless eyes, an aquiline nose, too broad and long, thick lips, which were constantly open, nervous twitches very disagreeable to see, and a slow way of speaking. Neither body nor mind were worth much, thought the ambassador. The sketch furnished by Z. Contarini of Anne of Brittany was not very flattering, as far as her personal appearance was concerned, but he spoke highly of her mental qualities. "The queen," he said, "is also small, thin, and very lame, dark, with a pretty face, and very cunning for her age. . . . She has a cultivated mind, loves the arts, poetry, and ancient literature; she knows Latin, and a little Greek; united by proxy to a prince she

had never seen, but whom she knew to be tall, well made, and a lover of science, it was repugnant to her feelings to abandon him for a prince without beauty, and, it is said, ignorant to such a point when he ascended the throne that he could not read." When the match was first spoken of Anne of Brittany said, "I am bound by ties of marriage to the Archduke Maximilian; and the King of France, on his side, is engaged to the Princesse Marguerite of Austria, therefore we are neither of us free." And yet this marriage between Charles and Anne took place in 1492.

"The strength of mind and the energy of Anne of Brittany," says Godefroy, in his *History of Charles VIII.*, "were so well known that every one in Europe was persuaded that she would prefer exile and even want to the crown of France presented by hands which she detested. The astonishment was general when it was known that this independent princess, instead of flying away by sea, went almost unattended to Langeais to marry Charles VIII. It must be observed, to the glory of this princess, that, zealous to fulfil all her duties, she conceived as much tenderness for her husband as she had shown aversion before knowing him. The joy of Madame (the Duchesse de Bourbon) may be imagined when she presented the king with the most accomplished princess of Europe, who brought him for dowry Brittany and other vast domains. From Langeais madame conducted the new queen to St. Denis, where she was crowned with

extraordinary pomp. A short time afterwards she made her solemn entry into the capital, in the midst of the acclamations of an immense crowd, never weary of admiring her beauty and grace. . . . Madame, whose genius had triumphed over so many obstacles, rode alongside of the queen, and shared the honours of her triumph.

“It was thus that Anne de France, Duchesse de Bourbon, terminated her brilliant administration. She handed over to the king the reins of the State, which she had saved and aggrandised; should ever the nation raise statues to the great men who have extended her frontiers, will they forget the princess who united to the Crown a province not less celebrated for the courage of its inhabitants, than their talent for navigation. . . .?”

Charles VIII. had been married in his infancy to Margaret of Austria, the daughter of Maximilian, who had been brought up at the Court of France with the honours and title of queen; the age of the wife, who in 1491 was only eleven years old, had fortunately retarded the consummation of the marriage; it was decided to deprive Maximilian of his wife, and to send him back his daughter, and, if necessary, to sacrifice the rich dowry of Margaret, Artois, and Franche-Comté in exchange for Brittany.

Writing of the fortunes of the Bourbons at this period, Desormeaux¹ says that the house “was divided into four branches: glory, power, titles, and

¹ Vol. ii. p. 41.

wealth distinguished the ducal branch, composed of six princes and five princesses, then or afterwards married to sovereigns. These are the names of the princes who all shone with brilliancy on the scene—Jean II.; Philippe, Lord of Beaujeu, who died just as he was about to wear the crown of Cyprus; Charles, who was Archbishop of Lyons at the age of nine years, then Cardinal, Legate of Avignon, and chief counsellor of Louis XI.; Pierre, who succeeded Jean II., and was Lieutenant-General of the kingdom under Charles VIII.; Louis, Bishop of Liege, and Jacques, Knight of the Golden Fleece. Charles I., not wishing his wealth to be shared among too many heirs, consecrated two sons to the Church without consulting their tastes. The Cardinal de Bourbon lived like a warrior prince, voluptuous and magnificent; he took for his crest a hand surrounded with flames, with this motto, more fit for a soldier than a bishop, "*n'espoir, ne peur.*" Louis de Bourbon carried his distaste for his sacred functions still further than his brother; his passion for arms, for gallantry, for show, and dissipation aroused the indignation of his subjects, and drove them to revolt. Hence those atrocious wars which were terminated only by the destruction of Dinant and of Liege itself. He was assassinated by the hand of a perfidious friend"—assassinated as described by Walter Scott in *Quentin Durward* by William de la Mark, the "Wild Boar of the Ardennes."

The first branch of the Bourbons consisted, therefore,

of Robert de France, Baròn de Bourbon, and the dukes Louis I., Pierre I., Louis II., Jean I., Charles I., Jean II., Pierre II. It existed for two hundred and fifty years—from 1256, when Robert de France was born, until 1503, when Pierre II. died.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SECOND BOURBON BRANCH, OR FIRST BRANCH OF THE MONTPENSIERS.

WITH Pierre II. terminated the eldest branch of the House of Bourbon. The second branch was founded by Louis de Bourbon, Comte de Montpensier, third son of Jean I., who, taken prisoner at Agincourt, died in London. Louis, surnamed the Good, had no children by his first wife, the Comtesse de Clermont, and four children by his second wife, Gabrielle de la Tour. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Gilbert de Bourbon, Comte de Montpensier, Dauphin d'Auvergne, Archduke of Sessa, Viceroy of the kingdom of Naples, Governor of Paris, &c., who married the daughter of the Duke of Mantua, and who died at the early age of forty-eight, leaving behind him six children. His eldest son died of grief on the tomb of his father, and so the family honours descended to his next brother, known to fame as Charles II.

Charles II. married Suzanne de Bourbon, the only daughter of Pierre II. and Anne de France. He had three children, all of whom died in their infancy,

while he himself was killed at Rome in 1527, at the age of thirty-eight years. With Charles II. the first branch of the Bourbon Montpensiers came to a close, and consequently that of Vendôme became the eldest branch of the House of Bourbon.

Guizot, who has dwelt at some length on the career of Charles II., says that "one powerful prince remained in France, the last of the quasi-feudal sovereigns, and the chief of the only provincial dynasty descended from the Capets, which raised its head alongside of the royal house. There were no longer any Dukes of Burgundy, Anjou, or Brittany, and no Counts of Provence; either by good fortune or by skill the French crown had absorbed all these parent and rival states. Charles II., Duc de Bourbon, was alone invested with a power and independence which might lead to rivalry. He possessed the Bourbonnais, Auvergne, Forez, the Marche, and the Beaujolais, and a great number of domains and castles in various parts of France. Throughout all these possessions he levied taxes and troops, convoked local boards, appointed officers of justice, and disposed of nearly all the social forces. . . . Born on the 10th February, 1490, four years before François I., and head of the younger branch of the Bourbons Montpensier, he married in 1515 his cousin Suzanne de Bourbon, the only daughter of Pierre II., chief of the elder Bourbon branch, and of Anne de France, the talented and long time powerful daughter of Louis XI. Louis XII. had paid great attention to this

marriage, and had stipulated in the contract that—‘man and wife should mutually leave all their property to the survivor.’ The young Duke Charles thus inherited all the possessions of the House of Bourbon; and he held at Moulins a princely court, of which he himself was the chief ornament. Brought up from his youth in the exercises of chivalry, he was an accomplished knight before he became an experienced warrior, and he no sooner appeared on the field of battle than he acquired the renown not only of a valiant prince, but of an able general. In 1509, at the battle of Agnadel, under the eyes of Louis XII. himself, he showed himself a worthy pupil of Tremouille, De la Palice, and of Bayard; in 1542, at the battle of Ravenna, his reputation was so well established in the army, that when Gaston de Foix was killed, the troops demanded that Charles de Bourbon, then only twenty-two years of age, should be appointed his successor. Louis XII. rendered full justice to his courage and skill as a warrior; but the reserved character, the haughty independence, and the audacity displayed at moments by the young prince inspired the aged monarch with some uneasiness. ‘I wish,’ he said, ‘that he was more open-hearted, more gay, and less taciturn; I dread still water.’

“In 1516, the year following the death of Louis XII., the Venetian ambassador at Milan wrote to the Council of Ten—‘This Duc de Bourbon handles a sword with great dexterity; he fears God, he is devout, humane, and liberal; he has a revenue of

120,000 crowns—20,000 through his mother-in-law, Anne de France, 2000 a month as Constable of France, and, according to M. de Longueville, Governor of Paris, he could dispose of half the king's army for any enterprise he desired to undertake, whether the king wished it or not."

At first overwhelmed with favours by François I., and after doing the State much service, Charles II. fell into disgrace, was recalled from Italy, and had his pay stopped. He retired to his princely residence of Moulins, where, as the Venetian traveller André Navagero said, "the dukes have constructed a magnificent palace in the shape of a fortress, with fine gardens, groves, fountains," &c., &c. Guizot adds—"As soon as the Constable went to reside there a large number of nobles flocked thither. A happy domestic incident shortly afterwards occurred; in 1517 the Duchesse de Bourbon was confined of a son, a piece of good fortune long despaired of. The Constable, highly delighted, wished the child to be baptized with great splendour; he begged the king to stand god-father, and the Dowager Duchesse de Bourbon, Anne de France, to be god-mother. François I. consented, and repaired to Moulins with his mother, and nearly all his court. The magnificence of the Constable astonished the magnificent king. Five hundred gentlemen all clothed in velvet, and each wearing a chain of gold which went three times round the neck, formed the usual retinue of the duke. . . ."

The Constable was present at the "Field of the

Cloth of Gold," and it was probably upon that occasion that our Bluff King Hal said to the French monarch—"If I had such a subject in my kingdom I would not leave his head long on his shoulders."

The son of Charles de Bourbon, whose baptism had been the occasion for such magnificent festivities, died in his infancy, and was soon followed to the grave by his mother. Suzanne de Bourbon died at Châtellerault in April, 1521; and she was no sooner dead than François I., listening to the insidious advice of Bourbon's enemy, the Chancellor Du Pratt, determined to contest the legality of her will. This gave rise to a curious adventure. The king's mother, Louise of Savoy, although forty-five years of age, was still a handsome as well as seductive and powerful woman. As a nearer relation to Suzanne de Bourbon than the Constable, she claimed a portion of her property; at the same time she was personally attached to Charles II. It was hoped that everything might be arranged by means of a matrimonial alliance, but in spite of all the efforts of François I., the Duc de Bourbon positively refused to offer his hand to Louisa of Savoy.¹ He contemptuously declared that he would never marry a woman dead to all sense of shame. The consequence was a law-suit. The matter of the famous will was laid before parliament, which,

¹ The whole history of Charles de Bourbon leads me to think, says Guizot (vol. iii. p. 46), that the feelings of Louisa of Savoy towards him, hatred or love, played a great part in the decisive incidents of his life.

after deliberating for eleven months, decided in favour of the Count. The fall and ruin of the Constable were complete. He made up his mind to leave France, and either offered his services to Charles V., or was offered aid and support by the emperor. However this may be, Charles de Bourbon served the emperor against his king and his country. Guizot says on this subject—"I am inclined to believe that Charles V., active and vigilant, was the first tempter; as soon as he heard that Bourbon was a widower he sent a message to him by Philibert Naturelli, his ambassador in France, who thus addressed him—"Sir, you are now free to marry; the emperor my master has a sister concerning whom I am charged to speak to you if you are inclined to listen." This was the eldest sister of Charles V., Eleanora, widow of Manuel de Fortuné, King of Portugal. Nothing came of this overture, but the year following, in 1522, war between François I. and Charles V. was declared, the rupture between François I. and Bourbon broke out, the Bourbon law-suit commenced, and Anne de France, the daughter of Louis XI. (and mother-in-law of Bourbon), died."

Before dying, this extraordinary woman, more anxious about the fate of the House of Bourbon than of her country, said to her son-in-law—"My son, remember that the House of Bourbon when it was allied to the House of Burgundy was always prosperous. You see in what a position we are with this law-suit, which is brought because we have no

alliances. I beg and command you to seek the alliance of the emperor. Promise to do this with diligence, and I shall die more contented." Anne de France died in November, 1522, leaving all her property to the Constable, who followed the advice of his mother-in-law, and entered into negotiations, not only with Charles V., but with Henry VIII. of England, for the purpose of reorganizing France, "and helping the poor." Guizot relates that "in 1523 the Duc de Bourbon presented himself one day before the queen when she was dining alone; she was favourable to him, and had wished him to marry her sister Renée, who afterwards became Duchess of Ferrara. She asked him to sit down. François I., who was dining in a neighbouring room, entered. Bourbon rose to leave. 'No, stay,' said the king. 'Well, it is then true that you are going to be married?' 'No, sire.' 'I know all about it; I am sure of it; I know of all your goings on with the emperor. Remember what I tell you.' 'Sire, this is a threat? I have not deserved to be treated thus!' After the dinner he returned to his hotel near the Louvre. A number of gentlemen who were in the court-yard accompanied him, forming his escort. He was still a powerful vassal, whom they considered to have been unjustly persecuted."

After some little time spent in negotiating by Henry VIII., Charles V., and the Duc de Bourbon, who obstinately refused to recognize Henry VIII. as King of France, though willing to draw his sword

against François I., a treaty was signed between the emperor and the duke. To his messenger, St. Bonnet, the duke said—"I send you to the emperor, to whom you will say, that I recommend myself humbly to his good will, that I beg he will give me his sister in marriage, and that in doing me this honour he will make me his servant, his good brother, and friend."

Bourbon was ill-paid for his treason. When Charles V. saw that he brought merely his sword and renown as a general to his standard, but neither the men nor the provinces he had promised, he altered his conduct. He refused Bourbon the hand of his sister.

Desormeaux himself excuses the emperor in this matter, saying—"Would it have been prudent to have trusted a prince who, born on the steps of the throne, had betrayed his blood and abjured his country? Charles V. might no doubt have assured himself of his good faith if he had given him in marriage Eleanor, to whom he was affianced, but he could no longer think of binding the destiny of a princess, his sister, to a prince equally degenerate and criminal."

It does not come within the province of this work to deal with the consequences of Bourbon's treachery, the defeat of the French king at Pavia by his quondam Constable, and his confinement at Madrid. Suffice it to say, that while François I. was a prisoner at Madrid he is said to have offered Bourbon the hand

of his sister, Marguerite de Valois, as a pledge of reconciliation. However this may be, the reconciliation never took place, and shortly afterwards Bourbon, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, fell mortally wounded at the siege of Rome.

Is it not strange to find the Duc de Bourbon refusing the hand of the mother of François I., to find him offered, and then demanding the hand of the sister of Charles, which princess was afterwards forced upon the French king when a prisoner at Madrid? Finally we find François I. offering the hand of his sister Marguerite to his rebellious subject—Marguerite destined shortly afterwards to become the wife of Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre, also captured at Pavia—Marguerite, the grandmother of Henri IV., King of France and Navarre!

In 1525 Marguerite, who had married the Duc d'Alençon, was left a widow. Her husband had been unable to survive the shame of having run away at the battle of Pavia. She obtained, three months after the death of the duke, permission to go to Madrid to try and arrange matters between the emperor and her brother, who had fallen ill. There, says Guizot, she formed a sincere attachment for the Princess Eleanor, whom Charles had promised to the Duc de Bourbon, and whose marriage with the king her brother Marguerite then proposed. In January, 1526, François I. signed the Treaty of Madrid, which almost set him free. This act accomplished, "the emperor repaired to Madrid to see the king; then

they went in the same litter to see the Queen Eleanor, to whom, by the said treaty, the king was to affiance himself before leaving Spain, which he did.¹

It was not, however, until 1528 that the marriage took place, as many difficulties had been raised concerning the execution of a treaty imposed by force—a treaty, many clauses of which were eluded by the French king.

Aucto Imperio,
Gallo victo,
Superata Italiâ,
Pontifice obsessa,
Roma captâ
Borbonius hîc jacet.

Such was the epitaph which the army of Bourbon consecrated to its slaughtered chief—an epitaph which celebrated only the great things the duke had accomplished during the last three years of his life.

The first Montpensier branch of the Bourbons was therefore composed of the dukes Louis, Gilbert, Charles II.

¹ *Memoirs of Martin de Bellay*, vol. ii. p. 15.

CHAPTER V.

THE LA MARCHE AND VENDÔME BRANCH.

DESORMEAUX refers to the Vendôme branch as that of Bourbon-la-Marche and Bourbon Vendôme, which became the eldest branch in 1527. The head of this branch was Jacques de Bourbon, surnamed the "flower of chivalry." He was the son of that Louis I. who married Marie of Hainault, and who died in 1341. Jacques and his eldest son were both killed in 1361, at the battle of Brignais, and Jacques was consequently succeeded by his second son, Jean, who married Catherine de Vendôme, who brought him vast estates, and gave him six children. The sixth child was Charlotte de Bourbon, who married the King of Cyprus, and who is said to have been one of the most accomplished princesses of the age.

Monstrelet says of this marriage in his quaint language—"In these days was broken the truce between the kings of France and of England, but only by sea, and there was stirred up a great war by which many merchants of the said kingdoms suffered much damage. The second day of August following, Jean de Lusignan married by proxy Charlotte de

Bourbon, which nuptials were celebrated in the castle of Melun, in presence of the Queen of France, the Duc d'Aquitaine, the King of Navarre, the Duc de Berry, the Duc de Bourbon, the Comtes de la Marche and Clermont, Louis of Bavaria, brother of the queen, with several ladies married and unmarried, who indulged in very joyful sports, such as *Joutes et danses, comme en solennités, boires et mangers, et autres consolations.*" We are then told that the Queen of Cyprus was—"une très belle dame, bien ornée et conditionnée de toutes nobles et gracieuses mœurs," and that after the *fête*, accompanied by great lords and notable ladies, she started for Cyprus. Her husband met her at the port of Chermes, and took her to Nicosia, where great *fêtes* were held in her honour. This was in the year 1409. According to St. Marthe,¹ the king, in spite of the necessities of the State, gave his god-daughter the sum of 600,000 crowns in gold. The king was Charles VI.

Jacques de Bourbon II. in the due order of things succeeded to Jean de Bourbon I. in 1393 ; he married first Beatrice, daughter of Charles III., King of Navarre, and of Eleonora of Castile, and afterwards Jeanne II., Queen of Naples, and became king of that country. He died in 1438, leaving behind him one daughter, Eleonore, by his first wife.

The life of Jacques de Bourbon II. was exceedingly chequered. As the Emperor Charles V. did a century later, three years before his death he became a

¹ *History of the House of France*, t. ii. p. 102.

monk, and shut himself up in a monastery at Besançon.

Louis de Bourbon, Comte de Vendôme, succeeded his brother Jacques in 1438. He married first Blanche de Roucy, and second Jeanne de Laval. By his second wife he left two children, Jean and Gabrielle, who died unmarried. Louis was the founder of the Bourbon-Vendôme branch.

Jean de Bourbon II. succeeded his father in 1446. He married Isabelle de Beauvau. With respect to this marriage Desormeaux says—"It will be seen that all the crowned heads of Europe descend by this marriage from the House of Beauvau, one of the most ancient and distinguished in the kingdom" (tom. i. p. 50). And—"the branch of Vendôme, called to such high destinies, was ushered in by wisdom, honour, disinterestedness, and worth. People saw the grace, the affability, and the courage of his ancestors revived in the person of Jean II. After having distinguished himself in the wars against the English, this prince married Isabelle de Beauvau, who brought him the rich domains of Roche-sur-Yon and Champigny. It is to this virtuous and fortunate couple that was uniquely reserved the glory of perpetuating the most august race in the universe; it is from them that descend those generations of kings and heroes whose brilliancy eclipses the splendour of the most famous names in history."

Eight children were the fruit of this marriage. The third daughter, Jeanne, celebrated for her beauty,

married first Jean II., Duc de Bourbon, the "Scourge of the English;" second, Jean, first Comte d'Auvergne; third, to the mortification of her family, François Baron de la Garde. This was considered a *mésalliance*.

François de Bourbon succeeded his father in 1477; he married the eldest daughter and chief heiress of Pierre de Luxembourg, widow of James of Savoy. This princess brought immense wealth into the House of Bourbon, and was accounted one of the most accomplished women of her age. This matrimonial alliance was brought about by the King Charles VIII., who was the cousin-german of the bride. According to Vignier's *History of the House of Luxembourg*, "The Princess Marie, grand-daughter of the famous Constable de St. Paul, left a widow in the flower of her age and all the splendour of her beauty, possessed nothing but the property of her house situated in the Low Countries; the rich domains which the Constable had owned in France had been confiscated and shared among the courtiers; it is true that Louis XI. had promised in an article of the Treaty of Arras to restore these domains to his heirs, but that monarch, who seldom kept his word, did not fulfil his engagements. As soon as Charles VIII. had arranged the marriage between the Comte de Vendôme (afterwards Duc de Bourbon) and Marie de Luxembourg, he gave up all that remained of the spoils of the Constable."

It is very much to the credit of the nobility of the period that most of the nobles who had received portions of the property legally belonging to the

House of Luxembourg hastened to imitate the example of the French king. As to the few nobles who refused to disgorge, an Act of Parliament very soon deprived them of the gifts they had received from Louis XI.

François de Bourbon fell in 1495, at the early age of twenty-seven, in Italy, where five other members of his family in the course of thirty years perished before him. He left behind him three sons and two daughters. His wife survived him for fifty-one years, earning by her virtue and charity the title of "the mother and nurse of the poor." His second daughter, Antoinette, married Claude de Lorraine, Duc de Guise, from which marriage descended the Dukes of Guise, so famous in French history, and who became the rivals of the Bourbons.

Charles de Bourbon, born in 1489, succeeded his father. He married Françoise d'Alençon, daughter of the Duc d'Alençon and of Marguerite de Lorraine, widow of François d'Orleans. His eldest son, Louis, died at the age of two years; his second son, Antoine, became King of Navarre, &c.; his third son, François, considered one of the heroes of the age, was killed by an accident when twenty-six years old; his fourth son, Louis, died at the age of three years; his fifth son, Charles, became a cardinal, and was declared king by the members of the League, under the title of Charles X., to the prejudice of his nephew, Henri IV. The cardinal left a natural son, who was very kindly treated by "the lad of Navarre."

The sixth son, Jean, was a warrior like François, and fell at the early age of twenty-nine at the battle of St. Quentin; the seventh son, Louis, founded the branches of Condé, Conti, and Soissons. After these seven sons came six daughters—Marie, engaged to James V. of Scotland, and Marguerite, who married the Duc de Nevers. The remaining four daughters devoted themselves to religion, and became abbesses.

On the death of Charles II., the treasonable Constable, in 1527, Charles III. had become head of the House of Bourbon, which soon recovered its wealth and splendour. St. Marthe tells us that the children of Charles III. and his brothers found a father rather than a king in the person of François I. His eldest son, Antoine, inherited at the age of nineteen the pensions and governments of his father; the Comte d'Enghien, his second son, while still almost a child, was appointed Governor of Hainault, of Luxembourg, &c.; and when this young prince fell in the midst of his triumphs the king wept for him as he had wept for the Dauphin and for the Duke of Orleans. The king adopted Marie de Bourbon, and wished to place her on the throne of Scotland. He greatly regretted that this marriage did not take place. The brothers of Charles de Bourbon were not less well treated.

CHAPTER VI.

SCOTCH MARRIAGES.

WITH regard to Marie de Bourbon, who was affianced to James V. of Scotland, Du Bellay says that she was adopted by François I., who gave her a dowry as if she had been one of the king's daughters. It was proposed to send her over to Scotland as soon as the campaign was over; the delay was fatal. It having been reported in Scotland, as well as in the rest of Europe, that Charles V. was making formidable preparations against France, James V. raised an army of 16,000 men and sailed to the aid of his ally; he was three times prevented from landing his troops by contrary winds, but he himself managed to get ashore at Dieppe, and he was hurrying to serve the French king as a knight when he learned the failure of Charles V. He continued his journey to embrace and congratulate François.

We are then told how deeply the French monarch felt this generous action, and in fact he received the King of Scotland with so much affection that the fickle James, forgetting the Princess de Vendôme, demanded from François the hand of Madame

Madeleine de France, whose beauty, grace, and rank flattered him more. The king was both surprised and embarrassed; it was he who had proposed the marriage with Marie de Bourbon (Princesse de Vendôme), to break it off would be to plunge a dagger into the heart of the daughter and of the father who had rendered him such great service; besides, this sound policy was opposed to a close alliance with the King of Scotland, the natural enemy of Henry VIII., whom it would have been contrary to the interest of France to offend.

“These reasons,” says Desormeaux, “should have made François hesitate, but that monarch, who was accustomed to act upon his first impulse, could not resist the entreaties of the young King of Scotland; the Princesse de Vendôme was sacrificed; James V. left the court in triumph, carrying away with him his illustrious conquest. His happiness vanished like a dream; the young queen died before the year was over. The princess who had been forsaken soon followed her to the tomb—the victim, perhaps, of regret at seeing the throne and the husband destined for her given to another.”¹

We may thus briefly relate the negotiations which took place on the subject of the Scotch alliance. Buchanan in his *History of Scotland*, Book xiv., says that the Duke of Albany, then Regent, when he renewed the Ancient League between the Scotch and French at Rouen, had one article inserted, that James

¹ How much truth is contained in the above statements?

should marry François I.'s eldest daughter. But there were two impediments in the way—"François I., delivered from the Spaniard by Henry VIII., had entered into a strict alliance with the English, and besides, the eldest daughter of François I. was deceased a while before; and therefore James desired Madeleine his next daughter to wife, and sent ambassadors over for that purpose; but her father excused the matter, alleging that his daughter was of so weak a constitution that there were but little hopes of children by her." In fact, François I. thought that in the event of his daughter having no children James would be less his friend after than before his marriage.

"About the same time," continues Buchanan, "there was an alliance treated of with Charles the emperor by ambassadors; and at length, the 24th day of April, 1534, the emperor sent Godscalk Erecus (or Errigo) that the matter might be carried with greater secrecy, from Toledo in Spain, through Ireland, to James."

Drummond in his *History of Scotland* thus describes what passed—

"The emperor by his ambassador expostulating the wrongs of his aunt (Katherine of Arragon, just divorced by Henry VIII.). . . . To make more lasting the emperor's friendship with King James, he (if he pleased) would make him an offer and give him the choice of three ladies—three Maries, all of the Imperial stem: Mary of Austria, the emperor's sister, the widow of Louis, King of Hungary; Mary of Portugal, the daughter of his sister Eleanora; Mary of

England, the daughter of Katherine and Henry—and would undertake the performance of this last, either by consent of her father, or by main force . . .”

James, in reply, said that “the ladies were every one in the superlative worthy, especially Mary of England,” but that “to ravish her out of the hands of her father would be, besides the danger of the enterprise, a breach of divine and human laws.” He added that—“It was not safe for Paris that he preferred one of the two goddesses to the other two; . . . that there remained a fourth lady near in blood to the emperor, Isabella, daughter of Christian, King of Denmark, and the emperor’s own sister Isabella.”

As regards this fourth lady, Errigo replied that she had been promised to the Count Palatine.

The historian then tells us that—“King James, not having lost all hopes of his uncle (Henry VIII.), directeth the Lord Erskine to England to acquaint him with the emperor’s and pope’s embassages, and to take his counsel about a marriage with the Duke of Vendôme’s daughter, whom the French king had offered to him, his own daughter being weak and sickly.

Buchanan, who doubted the sincerity of Cæsar, says that “the same month of August, when Francis had excused his daughter’s marriage on account of her health, but withal had offered him any other of the blood royal, the king sent ambassadors into France, James, Earl of Murray, viceroy of the king, and William Stuart, Bishop of Aberdeen (these two went

by sea), and John Erskine by land, because he had some commands to deliver to Henry of England on the way; to them he added a fourth person, *i. e.* Robert Reid, a good man and of consummate wisdom. There Mary of Bourbon, the daughter of Charles, Duke of Vendôme, a lady of the blood, was offered to them as a fit wife for their king. Other points were easily agreed upon; but the ambassadors, fearing that this marriage would not please their master, would make no espousal until they had acquainted him with it."

In Pinkerton's *History of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 335, we find it stated that—"The ambassadors of James in France concluded a marriage with Marie de Bourbon, daughter of the Duke of Vendôme, in consequence of a power from James, dated at Stirling the 29th of the preceding December (1535). This nuptial treaty was solemnly signed by Francis and by Albany, then on a bed of sickness, and it is believed of death."

A note runs thus—"Leagues France and Scotland, MS. Harl. 1244, sub annis. The instrument bears that, as Albany was sick, the notaries had it carried to his house."

Buchanan afterwards describes how Henry "troubled the matter which was on the point of concluding," sent James some religious books, offered him his daughter Mary, to leave him king of all Britain after his decease, and for the present to make him Duke of York and Viceroy of England.

Having referred these matters to his counsellors

the books were pronounced heretical, and the matrimonial scheme met with many objections. It was urged that Mary would not be marriageable for many years, that Henry did not really wish his daughter to marry, &c.

The consequence was, that James, impatient to be married, determined to go to France and see Marie de Bourbon with his own eyes. He set sail on the 26th July, and after being much tossed about and driven back into harbour, did not reach Dieppe until the 10th Sept. He immediately started for Vendôme incognito, where he saw his intended. Drummond, p. 311, says James found Marie de Bourbon "very beautiful and eminent in all princely excellences, but bethinking how he having the choice of three princesses, all daughters of kings, if he should fix his affections on this lady at the first interview, he should be obnoxious to the indignation of the other, he returned to Rouen."

Other authorities, such as Buchanan, Pinkerton, Sir Walter Scott, and several French writers, say that James was displeased with the personal appearance of Marie de Bourbon, and Lindsay gives the following description of the visit which His Majesty paid to the lady, without, however, saying why the match was broken off.

"But the King of Scotland would not show himself openly at that time, but disguised himself as he had been a servant, thinking he should not be known, neither to the duke, nor to his wife, or

the gentlewoman who should have been his spouse ; thinking that he should spy their fairness and behaviour, and be unknown of her and her father. Yet, notwithstanding, the fair lady took suspicion that the King of Scotland should be in that company ; wherefore she passed to her coffer, and took forth his picture, which she had gotten from Scotland by a secret *moyen* ; then she knew the king incontinent, where he stood among the rest of the company, and passed pertly to him, and took him by the hand, and said, ‘ Sir, you stand far aside ; therefore, if it please your grace to talk with my father, or me, as you think for the present, a while for your pleasure, you may if you will.’

“ The king hearing this was a little ashamed that he had disguised himself to be unknown, and syne was so hastily known by the *moyen* of that gentlewoman, that he passed to the Duke of Vendôme, and took him in his arms, and the duke again made him due reverence, who was greatly rejoiced at the king’s coming ; and so were all the rest of the duke’s company. And then the king passed to the duchess, and embraced and kissed her, and so did he to the duchess’s daughter, and to all the rest of the ladies ; and syne excused him, why he was so long unknown to them, desiring their pardon therefore. But he was soon forgiven, and brought unto their favour. Then there was nothing but merriness, banqueting, great cheer, music, and playing on instruments, playing melodiously, with galliard, dancing in masks,

and pretty farces and plays—all were made unto the King of Scotland; and all other pastime, as justing and running of great horse, with all other pleasure that could be devised.”

James V. once more demanded the hand of the Princess Madeleine, and François I., after trying in vain to persuade him to accept her younger sister Margaret, who afterwards married the Duke of Savoy, gave a reluctant consent. The marriage took place on the 25th November in presence of the French king, the King of Navarre, seven cardinals, and a great many dukes and barons. Pinkerton says, that “on the same day James was to have given away the daughter of the Duke of Vendôme, his once intended bride, to the Comte de Beauvais.” But in his description of the marriage of James he says never a word of Marie de Bourbon and the Count.

François I. was right as regards his daughter Madeleine, for she died forty days after landing in Scotland, where she had been received with great enthusiasm.

Drummond says that this unfortunate queen “was buried with the greatest mourning that Scotland ever till that time was participant of;” adding that, “these last honours to the dead queen and funeral pomp finished, the king, desirous of succession, hath yet his thoughts wandering to France. Mary of Bourbon, being frustrate of her Royal hopes, had not only turned religious (gone into a convent), but was dead of displeasure.” James could not, therefore, have gone back to her had he felt so inclined;

he consequently married Marie de Guise, the widow of the Duc de Longueville, who in due time gave birth to two sons, who died, and to a daughter, who was destined to lose her head on the block.

Miss Strickland's *Lives of the Queens of England* contains the following curious page on the subject of the matrimonial designs of Henry VIII. before his marriage with Anne of Cleves. "Francis I., when Henry requested to be permitted to choose a lady of the royal blood of France for his queen, replied 'that there was not a damsel of any degree in his dominions who should not be at his disposal.' Henry took this compliment so literally that he required the French monarch to bring the fairest ladies of his Court to Calais for him to take his choice. The gallantry of Francis was shocked at such an idea, and he replied 'that it was impossible to bring ladies of noble blood to market as horses were trotted out at a fair!'"

Chatillon, the French ambassador, gave François I. a lively account of the pertinacious manner in which Henry insisted on marrying the beautiful Marie of Lorraine, duchess dowager of Longueville, who was betrothed to his nephew, James V. of Scotland, February 11th, 1537. "He is," says his Excellency, "so in love with Madame de Longueville, that he is always recurring to it. I have told him that she is engaged to the King of Scotland, but he does not give credit to it. I asked him if he would marry the wife of another, and he said he knew that she

had not passed her word yet, and that he will do twice as much for you as the King of Scots can. He says your daughter is too young, and as to Mademoiselle Vendôme, he will not take the refusings of that king." . . In the succeeding month he still importuned for Madame Longueville. The ambassador proposed her handsome sister, or Mademoiselle Vendôme. Henry demanded that they should be brought to Calais for his inspection. Chatillon says that would not be possible, but his Majesty could send some one to look at them. "Pardie," replied Henry, "how can I depend upon any one but myself?"

And yet Henry depended upon others when negotiating for an alliance with Anne of Cleves. It is true that he regretted his confidence, and revenged himself on those who abused it. Perhaps his daughter Elizabeth may have remembered this when asked to bestow her hand on the Duc d'Anjou. The duke had to come over to the Court of St. James's for inspection.

In the year 1536 we find, that of the thirteen children born to Charles de Bourbon and Françoise d'Alençon, only five survived—first, Antoine de Bourbon, King of Navarre; second, François, Comte d'Enghien; third, Charles, Cardinal de Bourbon, proclaimed king under the League; fourth, Jean, killed at the battle of St. Quentin; fifth, Louis, Prince de Condé. The eldest and youngest alone had posterity. From Antoine, Roi de Navarre is descended, "the illustrious race which fills and

honours the thrones of France, Spain, Naples, and Parma; the Orleans branch also descends from it. From Louis, Prince de Condé, descend the military houses of Condé and Conti. "Therefore," observes Desormeaux, "all the princes who to-day bear the name of Bourbon, have for common ancestor Charles, Duc de Vendôme, surnamed the Magnanimous." And the same author adds, "This prince paid the tribute to human frailty." He left an illegitimate son by a Dutch lady. This son married, and left children, but the posterity was extinct in 1772.

The La Marche Vendôme branch, therefore, consisted of Jacques I., Jean de Bourbon I., Jacques II., Louis, Jean de Bourbon II., François, Charles III., Antoine. And this brings us down to King Henri of Navarre, who became Henri IV. of France.

With regard to the Scotch marriages, to which we have referred, we may append a few letters taken from the State Papers.

THE PRIVY COUNCIL TO WOTTON.

"May, 1545.

".. His Majestie¹ cannot but think that there is sumwhat eles in his² tarying there . . . and that there is sum speciall amitye between the Emperour and the Scottes; for, whereas it hath ben sayde there, in hugger mother, that the sayd ambassadour shuld treate a mariage between the Princes of Scotlande and one of Kinge Ferdinandes sonnes. His Majestie is informed out of Scotlande that great practise is made between them and the Emperor."

The English monarch at this period, just back from Boulogne, entertained serious and well-founded

¹ Henry VIII.

² The Scotch ambassador.

suspicious with regard to the intentions of his dear nephew and ally, Charles V., who made peace with the French at Cressy.

GARDYNER TO PAGET.

"Bruges, 4th Nov., 1545.

" Chapins told me a gret long communication bytween hym and thEmperour, and noted unto me howe lusty thEmperour is nowe. . . But tellyng me of his lustyness, he said therewith he had gret communication with Hym of my Lady Mary, and that he made thEmperours mouth water at it. . ."

Charles V. had been betrothed to Mary of England when he was twenty-three and when she was six years old; but when Mary was disinherited¹ the engagement was broken off by Charles V. When the above letter was written the Emperor was forty-five years of age. When he was fifty-three he wrote to Mary saying that he was too old himself, and asking her to marry his son Philip. This marriage took place the following year, that is to say, in 1554. It was in 1545 that Philip lost his first wife, the daughter of the King of Portugal, the most wealthy monarch in Europe.

THE PRIVY COUNCIL TO GARDYNER.

"24th Nov., 1545.

" Touching the mariages whereunto it semeth that thEmperour and his son for their own persons haue no gret hast, His Majeste is pleased to passe over those two, and yet His Highness doth sumwhat marvell of there sayeng that the Prince of Spayn is so ill affected to mariage, seeing it is in so many wayes reported that they have entred a talke with Fraunce for the mariage of the French Kinges doughter, being a person not so well favord as wer

¹ When Henry VIII. divorced Catherine of Arragon.

necessary for the weake courage of the Prince of Spayn. . . His Majeste would that you shuld fisse out asmoche as ye may of these doings touching that mariage with Fraunce. And because they seme very desirous and haue used meanes to persude the mariage betwene my Lord Princes Grace (afterwards Edward VI.) and one of the King of the Romayns Doughters. . . His Majeste who is contented to make her his own doughter lyketh thoffer very well. . . .”

GARDYNER TO KING HENRY VIII.

“Pleaseth it Your Most Excellent Majeste to understand that accordyng to Your Highness pleasour I have laboured to atteyne knowledge and find thEmperour doth neither for himself embrace the mariage of my Lady Mary nor accepte the offre of my Lady Elizabeth for hys son the Prince of Spayn.

The last day of Nov., 1545.”

Exactly twenty years before the above date the Emperor, as we have observed, had broken off his early engagement with Mary.

SIR JOHN MASONE TO COUNCIL.

“*Poissy, 26th August, 1550.*

“. . . . His Majesty [the French King] expressed his regret and would issue orders for the prevention of such quarrels in future. Confidentially informed him of a design by the Emperor and Lady Regent to send Skipperus to the English coast to carry away the Lady Mary and of the Emperor's hatred of England. . . .’

The Lady Regent being the widow of James V. and the Lady Mary, afterwards Queen Mary who was hampered in her devotions as a Catholic.

“*Greenwich, May 20th, 1551.*

“351. . . Instructions from King Edward VI. to the Marquis of Northampton, &c., proceeding to France to invest Henry II. with the Order of the Garter—to demand the Queen of Scots in marriage with the King of England; and in the event of that being refused, to solicit the hand of the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of the French monarch,” &c.

“29th May, 1551.

“370. . . . If the marriage of the King of England with the French king's daughter goes forward it is thought that the Pope will excommunicate both. . . .”

Hume in his *History of the House of Tudor*¹ says, that on peace being concluded with France in 1550, “an agreement was formed for a marriage between Edward and Elizabeth, a daughter of France, and all the articles after a little negotiation were fully settled. But this project never took effect.” In fact, Elizabeth de Valois married Philip II. in 1559.

¹ Vol. i. p. 330.

CHAPTER VII.

THE YOUNGER BRANCHES.

THERE were many other branches of the Bourbons. Of the Condés, who descend from Louis de Bourbon, the seventh son of Charles III., of the Contis, who descend from Armand de Bourbon, the fifth son of Henri II., and of the Soissons branch, which descends from the ninth son of Louis de Bourbon I., we shall speak hereafter.

Desormeaux, in addition to the above, gives us the geology of the following branches, legitimate and illegitimate—the second Montpensier, Carency, Duisant, Le Preaux, Du Maine, Toulouse, Vendôme, Lavédau, Malause, Busset, and Ligny. Concerning these we shall merely here remark, that the second Montpensier branch is descended from Jean de Bourbon and Isabelle de Beauvau; the Carency branch from the third son of Jean de Bourbon I.; the Busset branch from Louis de Bourbon, Bishop of Liege (assassinated by the Wild Boar of the Ardennes), who, before taking orders, had a natural son by a princess of the House of Gueldres. Philippe de Bourbon-Busset, who was slain at the battle of St.

Quentin, married Louise, the only daughter of Cæsar Borgia. And Louis de Bourbon-Busset, born in 1672, married, says Desormeaux, the daughter of the Marquis de Thoix and Henriette-Mauricette de Pennancoët de Kéroualle, Comtesse de Pembroke. Henriette-Mauricette, who first married the Earl of Pembroke, was the sister of the celebrated Louise de Querouailles, the mistress of Charles II., who was created Duchess of Portsmouth by the English and Duchesse d'Aubigny. by the French monarch. Her name, spelt Querouailles by Macaulay, and Kéroualle by Desormeaux, appears in the *Livre de Noblesse* as Kerouazle. In England she used to be called Madam Carwell.

We may also mention among the illegitimate branches the Malausc Bourbons, who appear to have been Calvinists. One of these, known as the Comte de Bourbon, died in London in 1732, a Lt.-General, while Louis de Bourbon-Malausc, who served in the bodyguard of William III., was killed at the battle of the Boyne. Guy Henri served under Turenne, abjured Calvinism in 1678,—ten years later than Turenne did,—and died in 1706.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MARRIAGE OF JEANNE D'ALBRET.

So important an event as the marriage of Jeanne d'Albret calls for special attention. Mdle. de Vauvilliers and Theodore Muret in France, and Miss Feer in England, are among the authors who have already written the life of that princess; while the Baron de Ruble, who has devoted a separate work to her marriage, is now engaged on her history, which it is said will extend over eight in octavo volumes, three of which have been completed.

We shall first of all say a few words of Navarre, which its historian, Favin, calls the most ancient kingdom in Christendom. It sprang into existence in the eighth century, when Garcia Ximenes became its ruler, and it acquired goodly proportions. The monarchy appears to have been both elective and hereditary—that is to say, the people elected their sovereign, who was succeeded by the heirs male and female of his body. In default of any direct heir there was an election.

The sovereign had to depend for his civil list on voluntary contributions; taxes were levied by the

Parliament, which could be summoned, but not dissolved, by the sovereign.

The last male of the line of De Foix was Francis, or Phœbus, as he was nicknamed, owing to his sunny, or golden hair. When he died the crown went to his only sister Catherine, and she had hardly ascended the throne when the courts of Paris and Madrid began to indulge in intrigues of every description with the view of obtaining her hand. The kingdom then consisted of Upper and Lower Navarre and the sovereignty of Bearn. It stood at once in France and in Spain. Both France and Spain proposed candidates, or husbands. Parliament was summoned to decide this grave matrimonial question. As the object of Spain was to conquer the country, and the object of France to maintain its independence, the propositions of the former were rejected *nem con.* The successful suitor for the hand of Catherine de Foix was Jean d'Albret, one of the most illustrious nobles in France, allied not only to the royal family of France, but to the ancient kings of Navarre. The marriage was celebrated in 1484, and gave deep offence to Spain. Jean turned out a weak and incapable sovereign.

In 1512 Ferdinand V. of Spain asked the King of Navarre to allow him to march an army through his states in order to fall upon Guyenne, in conjunction with Henry VIII. of England. He was well aware that this permission would be refused, and that the King and Queen of Navarre, through policy, if

through nothing else, would remain faithful to the French King, Louis XII. Ferdinand had a powerful ally in the Pope, whose authority had been resisted in Navarre, and who was bent on exacting summary revenge. Favon says, "That the kings of Castile had long watched a favourable moment for seizing on that kingdom, and extending their dominion to the Pyrenees. An opportunity was found by Ferdinand V., who, a Papal bull in his hand which excommunicated Jean d'Albret and Catherine de Foix, made himself master of Upper Navarre in the course of a week, and entered Pampeluna in triumph. The King and Queen of Navarre managed with great difficulty to effect their escape. Ferdinand attempted to lay hands on Lower Navarre also, but the resistance offered was too stubborn, and in addition to this the King of France, in whose cause Jean d'Albret and his wife had suffered, interfered. A truce was concluded. The King of Navarre kept Lower and the King of Spain Upper Navarre. Jean had to content himself with summoning his powerful enemy to appear before the tribunal of the king of kings to answer for his misdeeds. Needless to say that Ferdinand, who had acted on the authority of the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, disregarded this summons and kept Upper Navarre, which was destined for many a long year to be a terrible bone of contention, and the cause of endless intrigues.

Jean died, and was shortly afterwards followed to the grave by Catherine, whose end is said to have

been hastened by the grief she experienced because the emperor refused to restore Upper Navarre as he had promised.

She was succeeded by her son, Henri d'Albret, who was born in 1503, and who afterwards married Marguerite of France, the sister of François I., thus strengthening, or seemingly so, the connection between France and Navarre.

We shall pass very rapidly over the early years of Jeanne d'Albret, which do not much concern us here. She was born on the 7th January, 1528, at the castle of Pau, now celebrated as the birth-place of her son. She was the daughter of Henri d'Albret and of Marguerite d'Angoulême, the sister of François I. She was reared as a princess of the blood royal of France at Longray, Blois, and Alençon, and was of delicate health, giving much anxiety to her mother. One Nicholas Bourbon, represented as a Latin poet, an obscure and heavy grammarian, but an honest writer, who had frequent quarrels with the Sorbonne, and was more than once thrown into prison, was chosen as her tutor. Nicholas Bourbon seems to have instructed his pupil while amusing her. She is said to have been fond of the games suitable to her age, to have had "a parrot, a squirrel, a dancing-master, and a little girl called François to keep her company." She also owned "six turkey-hens and six turkey-cocks, the first seen in France," to which she was much attached. She was of an imperious character, and often beat poor François.

Clement Marot has described in verse the education of Jeanne d'Albret.

Two years after the birth of Jeanne there was a son born to the King and Queen of Navarre, but he died in infancy. The royal pair had no further male issue, and Jeanne was soon looked upon as an heiress whose marriage would have a great political interest, owing not to the size or wealth of Navarre, but to its position between France and Spain. It was what is now termed a "buffer state."

In 1512 there was a quarrel between Louis XII. and the Pope. Ferdinand the Catholic pronounced in favour of Jules II., declared war against France, and asked the King of Navarre to give him permission to march through his states. Jean d'Albret having refused this request, the Spaniards besieged Pampeluna, drove his Majesty across the Pyrenees, and took forcible possession of the greater portion of his kingdom.

Navarre, or rather Upper Navarre, was taken over by the Spaniards in the interest of the Holy League directed against France. Charles V., on succeeding his father, is said to have experienced some qualms of conscience with regard to this act of spoliation; but he attempted to justify it on the pretence that it had been accomplished in accordance with a papal bull. This papal bull, however, was apocryphal, and of this fact Charles V. was well aware. However this may have been, the emperor determined to compensate Henri d'Albret, the son and successor of Jean, or to

restore Navarre. But there existed a third means of repairing the injustice which had been done. Henri d'Albret had a daughter and Charles V. a son; the Infant (afterwards Philip II.) might marry the Princess Jeanne, and by this alliance the two crowns would be united. The emperor himself wrote that this would be the best way "to pacify and extinguish the Navarre quarrel," and to prevent a great and costly war.

The princes of Bearn, who remained the faithful allies of France, had reaped little but ingratitude from the Valois line. We have seen how the French alliance had cost the province of Pampeluna to Jean d'Albret in 1512.

In 1524 Henri d'Albret accompanied François I. to Italy, was taken prisoner with that monarch at the battle of Pavia, and with great difficulty made his escape; and yet in the Treaty of Madrid François I. completely abandoned his ally, promised to try and persuade him to renounce his rights to Navarre, and in case of refusal to give him no aid directly nor indirectly against the emperor. There is, however, this much to be said, the French king was a prisoner, and had no intention of observing a treaty wrung from him by force. In 1527—that is to say, three years after the battle of Pavia—Henri d'Albret married Marguerite of France, the sister of François I., and Marguerite did what she could to urge her brother to aid in the recovery of Navarre. But François I. had other designs, and then Charles V. held two of his

sons hostages at Madrid. In 1530 these two princes were sent back to France ; but even then the French king did nothing for his old comrade of Pavia, who had become his brother-in-law, and the consequence was a considerable amount of coolness between the monarchs.

In 1535 troubles arose with regard to the duchy of Milan, and a new war between the French king and the emperor seemed almost inevitable. At this juncture both parties accepted the mediation of Henri d'Albret, who hoped that, in the event of bringing about a durable peace, he would be recompensed with the restitution of Navarre—an illusion which Charles V. took care not to destroy.

In 1537 François I. deemed that the hour was propitious for smiting his powerful enemy. The propositions which Henri d'Albret had made on behalf of the emperor were rejected. A week later, however, came a complete change. The King of Navarre was summoned to Chantilly, where he found his brother-in-law much dejected. The Sultan Soliman had not moved as he had promised ; Florence, where troubles had been carefully fomented, had calmed down, and Henry VIII. had shown himself hostile to France.

What passed then is described in these terms by Baron de Ruble—"However, François I. could not make up his mind in favour of peace ; he put off giving the King of Navarre a definite answer until the next day. He spoke to him in the most friendly

way of their old alliance, and of his desire to cement it afresh by a marriage between Jeanne d'Albret and a French prince. The next day, early in the morning, the king suddenly left Chantilly without seeing the King of Navarre, as if to escape the necessity of giving a reply. A few days afterwards the King of Navarre received at Paris a verbal message from François I., with conditions which rendered peace impossible. Much displeased, he wrote directly to the emperor, gave an account of what had happened at Chantilly and Paris, the bad faith of François I., and suggested a marriage between his daughter and the Infant Philip. 'If this project be admitted,' he added, 'we may keep it secret, and pretend to be busy over a marriage between the princess and Henri de Foix, Comte de Cominges, related to the House of d'Albret, which would permit her father to take her to Bearn,' a precaution which shows that Henri D'Albret was not absolutely free to dispose of the hand of his daughter.

"Thus the King of Navarre of himself entered into the projects of the emperor. Charles V., however, disguised his satisfaction. After having discussed these propositions in council he drew up the following instructions—'Humour the Prince and Princess d'Albret, and pursue negotiations with them; especially those concerning the projected marriage; evasively advise them to withdraw their daughter from the hands of the King of France.'"

The emperor would no doubt have played a bolder

game had he not still dreaded an alliance between François and Soliman. A good deal of intrigue followed. At one moment François I. almost persuaded his brother-in-law to assume the command of a force destined to invade Spain, and to aid in the restoration of his lost territory. But just as he was about to accept the offer, he learned that François I. had in reality no idea of undertaking hostilities, and that his sole object was to embroil him with the emperor.

At the beginning of 1538 the Pope, Paul III., undertook to play the part of mediator, in which Henri d'Albret had failed the preceding year. The result was that Charles V. and François I. repaired to Nice, where they signed a truce of ten years without seeing each other.

An interview, however, took place between the two sovereigns a few days later at Aigues-Mortes, from the 14th to the 17th July; but the only question concerning Jean d'Albret which seems to have been discussed at or shortly after this meeting, was brought forward by the Queen of France, Eleanor of Castile, the sister of Charles V. She proposed the marriage of Jeanne with Maximilian, the son of Ferdinand, the King of the Romans and of Hungary, and own nephew of Charles V. This match was by no means to the taste of the French king, or to the House of Albret, who could not of course foresee that Maximilian would inherit the imperial throne in 1564. The Spanish ambassador, when he communicated

this proposition to his master, pointed out the preference shown by the King of Navarre for the Infant Philip.

Baron de Ruble here remarks, that "François I. had foreseen the difficulties which the marriage of his niece would cause to his policy. The Imperial ambassadors often insinuated in their letters that the King and Queen of Navarre were not absolutely free to dispose of the hand of their daughter. The best means of placing this heiress beyond the reach of competition was to marry her; but at the date of the truce of Nice there was no 'son of France' whose hand could be disposed of. The Dauphin, whom Marguerite had wished to obtain for her daughter, had died suddenly in 1536, in consequence of drinking a glass of iced water after playing at tennis. The king's second son, afterwards Henri II., had married the Pope's niece, Catherine de Medicis. The third son, who took the name of the Duc d'Orleans after the death of his eldest brother, was still free, and the Venetian ambassador, Marino Giustiniano, says that his marriage with Jeanne was much spoken of at Court about 1535; but François I. then aimed at some higher alliance; he demanded for his son a daughter of the King of England, or a daughter of the emperor, with the duchy of Milan for dowry. He proposed to the King of Navarre Antoine de Vendôme, the eldest son of the Duc de Bourbon, and the next heir to the throne after Valois line."

This proposition in no way suited their Majesties

of Navarre. Antoine de Bourbon, who succeeded his father in 1537, at the age of nineteen, and inherited all the family property, honours, and appointments, had a taste for luxury and dissipation which was not at all in keeping with the staid and frugal character of the little court of Bearn. These matrimonial schemes were dragging languidly along when François I. was informed of the negotiations going on between Henri d'Albret and Charles V. He at once determined to do all in his power to prevent Jeanne from passing over to the enemy.

We must return for a moment to Paul III. and the truce of Nice. The Pope used all the influence of his high position to induce Charles and Francis to conclude a lasting peace instead of that truce for ten years which was destined to last only four. At an advanced age he left Rome, in order to urge his views personally on the rival monarchs, but without success. According to the *State Memoirs* of Ribier, the pontiff would have been consoled for the failure of his efforts if, as he ardently desired, he could have "mingled his blood" with that of France. "Struck with the rank, reputation, and grace of the Duc de Vendôme (afterwards Antoine de Bourbon), who accompanied the French king, he wished to have that prince for his son-in-law, and proposed to Francis that the duke should marry Vittoria Farnesa, his grand-daughter; these pretensions were authorized by the example of Catherine de Medicis, who had had the honour of marrying the heir to the French crown. Francis,

who thought that he then stood in need of the friendship of the venerable pontiff, appeared to favour this alliance at first, but on his return to France he changed his mind; in place of the Duc de Vendôme, whom he destined as the husband of his own daughter Marguerite (in default of a crowned head), he offered the Pope first the Comte d'Enghien, Vendôme's brother, then the Comte d'Aumale, of the House of Lorraine, who became so celebrated afterwards as the Duc de Guise. Paul III. would not consent to the change."

And, in fact, all these matrimonial schemes fell through; the Duc de Vendôme married neither Vittoria Farnesa nor Marguerite de France; the Comte d'Enghien died unmarried; and the Duc de Guise married, as we have seen, Antoinette de Bourbon, the aunt of the Duc Antoine de Bourbon. It was reserved for Antoine to marry Jeanne d'Albret, and through this marriage to become King of Navarre.

Once determined that Jeanne should not pass over to the enemy, the French king acted with vigour. He took her away from the castle of Alençon, and sent her to the old feudal *manoir* of Plessis les Tours, a strongly fortified place, rendered doubly gloomy by its high walls, its deep ditch, and barred windows, and the memories of that despotic old monarch whose portrait has been so graphically traced by Sir Walter Scott in his *Quentin Durward*. This arbitrary act was committed without Henri d'Albret, his wife, or Jeanne being consulted on the subject. Jeanne is said to

have been sadly distressed at this change, and to have wept so bitterly as to compromise her position as one of the loveliest princesses of Europe.

A very serious matter for the House of Albret was the expense which this sequestration occasioned. The King of Navarre was poor; it was all he could do to keep up his state on a limited scale in Bearn, and now he had to provide for the numerous household of his daughter. François I. had promised to bear his share of the expenses, but his prodigalities and his war in Italy had emptied his coffers, and his promises were broken.

It is pleasant to reflect that when the French king had taken all these precautions against the marriage of his niece with the Infant, he was the ally if not the friend of Charles, and the emperor was preparing to pass through France on his way to Flanders to quell an insurrection of the Gantois. And in fact Charles V. did pass through France shortly afterwards, not liking to go round by Germany, and fearing to go by sea, as he was on bad terms with Henry VIII., who had married Anne, the daughter of the Duke of Cleves, in 1537, at the instigation of Lord Cromwell, and who was then engaged in pursuing that minister's policy; of which Mr. Green says in his *History of the English People*, that had it been carried out it would have anticipated the triumphs of Richelieu, have secured South Germany for Protestantism, and have averted the Thirty Years' War.

On the 10th December, 1539, Charles V. arrived at

Loches, where François I., accompanied by the King of Navarre and a crowd of nobles, met the emperor at the gate of the castle. At the foot of the staircase stood the queen (the sister of Charles V.), the Queen of Navarre, the Dauphine, Catherine de Medicis, Jeanne d'Albret, and the king's favourite, the Duchesse d'Estampes.

It appears that in passing through the duchies of Albret and Guyenne, Charles V. had remarked how well they were administered by the King of Navarre, that he was much struck with the qualities of his Majesty, and that he afterwards declared to his courtiers that he had seen but one man in France, the King of Navarre. At Loches, and during the remainder of the journey to Flanders, the emperor had plenty of opportunity for conversing with Henri d'Albret, as the French king was obliged, owing to ill health, to travel in a litter.

Baron de Ruble says that François I., through condescension or dissimulation, did not reject the proposed marriage between the Infant of Spain and Jeanne d'Albret, and that Chancellor Poyet went so far as to tell Poggio, the papal nuncio, that the king would consent to the marriage if the Infant would make him a present of Navarre.

It is necessary to mention here another episode in this intricate matrimonial affair. While the emperor was in Paris he had several interviews with the Cardinal, Alexander Farnese, nephew of Paul III. The Farneses claimed the duchy of Milan, and so

did the French king. Charles V. had promised to recognize the claims of François I., and while in France he was frequently pressed to keep his promise; it is even said that the French king was strongly advised not to allow his guest to depart until he had handed over the duchy.

On the 20th January, 1540, the king and queen, who had accompanied Charles V. to the frontier, took leave of the emperor, who was escorted as far as Valenciennes by the Dauphin, the Duke of Orleans, the Constable, and the nobles who had met him at Bayonne. A last attempt was then made by the Constable to obtain a favourable answer on the subject of the Milanais; the emperor, however, would go no further than to promise that he would submit the affair to his council. On reaching Brussels he summoned this council, which was composed of his brother Ferdinand, King of the Romans, and his sister Mary of Austria, Queen of Hungary. He denied having promised the Milanais to Francis; he had simply engaged to give his daughter Doña Maria to the Duke of Orleans, with an apanage for a dowry, the Milanais or another, but not without being accorded several advantages on his side, and among these the marriage of his son with the heiress of Navarre. The emperor, supposing that François I. would offer no opposition to this scheme, or that he would be able to remove his objections, directed his ambassador, Francis de Bonvalot, to demand the hand of Jeanne d'Albret from the French monarch.

The emperor accompanied this demand with a promise of several compensations seductive enough in appearance, but said never a word of the Milanais. He offered the hand of his daughter to the Duke of Orleans, with the investiture of the Low Countries, Gueldres, and Zutphen; the renunciation of all rights to Burgundy and Charolais; the abandonment to the king of the "border lands" of Franche-Comté, in return for a compensation of 2,000,000 fr., and the marriage of Marguerite of France with Prince Maximilian. But the Low Countries were strongly opposed to the domination of a French prince; Gueldres and Zutphen not only did not belong to the emperor, but since the commencement of the century had been in the possession of a German house hostile to Austria and devoted to France. As for Burgundy and Charolais, they had long since in reality formed part of France, and with regard to the border lands of Franche-Comté, they were not worth the money asked for them.

The Imperial ambassador made his demand, and received for reply that these marriages had nothing to do with the affairs to be discussed between the two sovereigns, and that seeing the age of the persons concerned, there was no necessity for being in any hurry in the matter.

The King and Queen of Navarre received the overtures of the emperor in a very different fashion; they were enchanted at the idea of their daughter occupying the Imperial throne. As Baron du Ruble

observes—"Of the two alliances offered, the one—that of France—would have brought about the ruin of Navarre without any probable compensations, the other—that of Spain—promised to their grandchildren the empire of the two hemispheres."

After approving of the marriage of Antoine de Bourbon with Jeanne d'Albret, the French king suddenly changed his mind in favour of another scheme. According to Mademoiselle de Vauvilliers,¹ François I. already beheld in imagination Charles V. and Henry VIII. dividing France between them. To prevent this catastrophe, he determined to give the hand of Jeanne to the Duke of Cleves. He thought that Jeanne would offer no objection to a union which would put an end to her exile, and he refused to listen to the remonstrances of the King and Queen of Navarre, who claimed the right of disposing of the hand of their only child. The French king refused to pay any heed to these and other objections; Henri d'Albret and his wife were ordered to join the French court, and to bring Jeanne with them from Plessis-les-Tours, but on arriving at Amboise they did not disguise their repugnance to the contemplated union.

The Duke of Cleves was at this time one of the most powerful princes of North Germany. Charles V. refused to recognize his right to Gueldres and Zutphen, although the duke went to plead his cause with the emperor at Ghent. By the *Memoirs of*

¹. *Jeanne d'Albret*, t. i. p. 7.

Kibier,¹ we see that the ambassadors thought they would obtain the recognition of his rights together with the hand of the Princesse Christine of Denmark, the emperor's niece. Charles V. proving inflexible, the Duke of Cleves made overtures to Francis I., who recognized his rights, and his ambassador, Herman Creuser, doctor in law, was instructed to demand the hand of Jeanne d'Albret on behalf of his master. He made his demand at the nick of time, when Francis I. was highly irritated with his rival on the subject of the Milanais. Secret negotiations were at once commenced, and were rapidly carried on. On the 21st June, 1540, the duke despatched two plenipotentiaries to Blois to join Herman Creuser; they brought with them credentials addressed to the King and Queen of Navarre, to the Cardinals du Bellay and Lorraine, to the Constable Montmorency, to Marshal Annebaut, to Longueval, and to the king's mistress, the Duchesse d'Estampes. The great difficulty was to obtain the consent of Henri d'Albret to this marriage. In order to procure this, the French king swore to recover Navarre for him; he offered to raise a body of 22,000 men in Germany, and a reserve of 7000 Italians or French. The emperor was to be attacked at the same time in Biscay, Roussillon, and Italy. The most minute details of these operations were arranged.

According to Herman Creuser, great difficulty was

¹ T. i. p. 518.

experienced in persuading Marguerite of Navarre to consent to the sacrifice of her daughter, but all her objections could not of course form a permanent obstacle to the contemplated alliance. On the 3rd July the plenipotentiaries from Cleves arrived in Paris; the next day they were received by the French king, who promised his niece a dowry of one hundred thousand crowns, on condition that the future couple would renounce their claims on Navarre—a curious stipulation, which was of course rejected. As for the other matrimonial clauses, they were reserved for the consideration of the King and Queen of Navarre.

Henry VIII. appears to have done what he could to render these negotiations abortive. On the 6th January the King of England, misled by the unfortunate Cromwell and Doctor Barnes as to the personal charms of Anne of Cleves, reluctantly married that princess, afterwards sending Cromwell to the scaffold, and having the poor doctor burned at Smithfield. A letter written by the plenipotentiaries of the duke on the 14th July, 1540, shows how Henry VIII., fearing lest the marriage should take place, and his wife obtain the support of Francis I., wrote to the French king, saying—"Qu'il repoussait la sœur du Duc de Clèves parcequ'il ne pouvait pas avoir deux femmes à la fois, et qu'apararent il avait promis fidélité à une dame Anglaise avec la quelle il avait dormi. A cause de cela il n'avait en aucum rapport avec la sœur du duc."

However, all was in vain. The representatives of the King of France and of the Duke of Cleves speedily came to terms; on the 17th July they signed a defensive treaty at Anet, and the same day the marriage contract was signed in Paris—a contract preserved in the archives of Pau. By this act husband and wife promised to celebrate their union directly the princess attained a suitable age. The only other clause which we need notice here was one which François I. considered would prevent the possibility of any reconciliation between the Duke of Cleves and the emperor, and which was also a sop to the House of Albret. The duke and the future duchesse pledged themselves not to treat on the subject of the quarrel concerning the kingdom of Navarre without the consent of his most Christian Majesty or his successors.

When contract and treaty had been signed and ratified the king, who was then at Fontainebleau, sent for Jeanne, and in presence of her mother proposed that she should become Duchesse of Cleves. "She offered several objections," says Mademoiselle Vauvilliers; "she offered none," says Baron de Ruble, on the strength of a despatch written by the Spanish ambassador Descurra, and the baron was no doubt right.

The emperor was not long in learning the events which had passed at Anet, Fontainebleau, and Paris, and the difficulties of his position made him feel all the more the defection of the Duke of Cleves.

Sedition was smouldering in the Low Countries; the Lutheran princes threatened the unity of the empire; the sultan was on the eve of invading Hungary; both the Pope and the Venetians were wavering in their alliance; the Pope seemed disposed to come to terms with France, and the Venetians to cast in their lot with Soliman. Charles publicly expressed his indignation to the French ambassador at the conduct of his master, and wishing to learn the full details of what had been accomplished in France, a plot was formed for snapping up the plenipotentiaries of the Duke of Cleves on their way home, and of securing the person of the duke on his road to France. Owing to the precautions adopted by the plenipotentiaries and by the duke both these enterprises failed; not that the duke did not delay his journey to Paris.

In spite of the point at which matters had arrived—the signature and ratification of treaty, &c.—we find that the King of Navarre had not given up all hopes of having the Infant of Spain for his son-in-law, but he took good care not to quarrel with the French king until he had come to terms with the emperor. Secret negotiations on this subject were opened up, Descurra acting as intermediary between the King of Navarre and Charles V. Henri d'Albret, who protested that he had signed the marriage contract between the Duke of Cleves and his daughter against his will, offered to have her carried off as soon as the matrimonial stipulations with the emperor

were settled. Several months elapsed, during which Henri d'Albret was always pressing for a speedy settlement, and the emperor and his agents constantly raising objections, or rather refraining from adopting a final decision, and bringing matters to an issue. The summer passed away, poor Jeanne returned to her prison at Plessis-les-Tours, and Henri d'Albret and his wife to Bearn. In the autumn of 1540 the emperor, in a codicil to his will dated 28th October, had no hesitation in recommending the Princess d'Albret as worthy of ascending the throne of Spain. Yet neither did Charles V. accept the proposals of the King of Navarre, nor did the Duke of Cleves repair to France to claim the hand of the youthful princess. It is true that, as regards Charles, Navarre stood in the way. Baron de Ruble says, "Negotiations dragged on for several months. Letters succeeded each other in vain. In principle the emperor accepted the marriage of his son with Jeanne, but he had not even sent his representative in France any instructions to discuss matters with Descurra. In the second draught of a treaty handed to Bouvalot on the 27th December, 1540, the prince renewed his demands; the most important, that which would admit of no concession, was the restitution of the whole of Navarre, with its fortresses, and an indemnity for depossession dating from 1512. This was the clause which most displeased the grandson of Ferdinand the Catholic. To restore Navarre was to acknowledge a wrong, and if the Prince

d'Albret should come to terms with the King of France, it would be to introduce the enemy into the heart of Spain."

In the month of February, 1541, we find the emperor putting off any decision in the affair until after the 21st May, when Jeanne would be fourteen years of age. Bouvalot wrote to the emperor that the King of Navarre was of opinion that his Majesty merely wished to gain time, and had no intention of concluding anything. However, Henri d'Albret accepted the adjournment.

On his side the French king seemed anxious for the marriage with the Duke of Cleves; he granted to the children which might be born to the Duke and Duchess of Cleves, although foreigners, the right of possessing property in France, and the duke was invited to come to Fontainebleau. He sent two messengers to the French court, and was preparing to follow them, but for some reason put off his journey, and began to suspect that Francis I. had changed his mind. However, another invitation was sent to the duke asking him to spend Easter at Amboise; Francis I. pledged his royal word that all difficulties in the way of the marriage would be removed, and he advised him as to the safest road to take. At the same time, two gentlemen were despatched to the King of Navarre to announce the arrival of the duke, and to claim the fulfilment of the engagement signed at Anet.

In April the duke, who regarded his marriage

contract as a declaration of war against the emperor, took a bold and unexpected step. He openly announced to his Chamber, that being convinced he could obtain the hand of the emperor's niece, Christine, only on condition of renouncing the Duchy of Gueldres, he had signed a matrimonial convention with the Princess of Navarre, with the consent of the King of France, and that he was going to the French court to marry her. The same day he left Dusseldorf in disguise, followed by three gentlemen; he thus managed to avoid falling into the clutches of the Imperial agents. He arrived in Paris on the 20th April, and secretly took up his abode in the Abbey of St. Germain, belonging to Cardinal de Tournon.

Messengers were despatched by François I. and the Duke of Cleves, asking the King of Navarre to repair to Fontainebleau; the duke excused himself for arriving there first. Henri d'Albret attempted to delay the evil moment; he replied that his daughter was too young to be married, that she was thin and weak, and that he could not consent to give her a husband before two years. These and other pretexts were found for not carrying out the agreement of Anet, and at length the Duke of Cleves, looking upon them as a refusal, reminded the French king of his engagements. François I., wounded in his honour as a gentleman, says Baron de Ruble, sent another message to the King of Navarre, urging him to come to court. The king found another motive for delay. He must ask the consent of his subjects. The "States

of Bearn" were assembled, and the propositions of the King of France were submitted to them. They protested against the alliance, and Henri d'Albret informed François I. that his subjects would gladly see the heiress of Bearn, their future queen, marry one of the "sons of France," but that they objected, in the name of their privileges, to a marriage with a German prince. What they wanted was to have a king of their own. These and other reasons, all more or less valid, were urged against the match. The French king was highly indignant, and said to the messenger from Bearn—"Tell the King of Navarre, my brother, that he promised the hand of his daughter to the Duke of Cleves, and that promises must be kept; that should he refuse, the Duke of Cleves, who is an honest man, will have the right of exacting the observance of his promise; and that, if he forces me, I myself will marry his daughter, not as Princess of Navarre, but as a daughter of the House of D'Albret."

The King of Navarre could only remind François I., who had the power of disposing of his daughter's hand, of the services he had rendered France, of his imprisonment after Pavia, and how, in all the treaties signed between France and Spain, his interests had been neglected. He even offered to pay the Duke of Cleves 50,000 livres to forego his claim. Henri d'Albret was in the position of a lamb between two wolves; his protestations and his supplications were alike vain. François I. would listen to no excuses; he was intent on securing the alliance of the Duke of

Cleves, and he declared that he would force Jeanne to marry in spite of her father.

The King of Navarre at length consented to the marriage, but refused to be present. Queen Marguerite, who was to go alone to the French court, never ceased weeping over the obstinacy of her brother, and fell ill. Just as she was about to leave Pau there came a gentleman from the Duke of Cleves with a new mission. The duke wrote to say that he was aware of the pressure exercised by the King of France on his sister, and that he did not wish to marry the princess against the will of her father and mother, that he would return home without regret if the King of Navarre would swear to give him his daughter in two years' time. To this honourable proposition Henri d'Albret returned an honourable reply. He said that in refusing the hand of Jeanne to the Duke of Cleves he acted as the friend of the Duchy of Gueldres as well as of Bearn; that seeing the constant state of rivalry which existed between Charles V. and François I., it was dangerous for two petty princes to form an indissoluble alliance by means of a marriage; that the sovereigns of Spain and France might become reconciled, and, in that case, he asked, what would be the fate of the Duchy of Gueldres and of Bearn? In return for some compensation in Italy François I. would have no scruple about delivering his allies over to the emperor. War was brewing; the King of France was actively engaged in making preparations; he would require

allies; he would then pay high for the co-operation of small states; but neither Gueldres nor Bearn would obtain anything if they were already bound to France.¹ Henri d'Albret concluded by once more offering the duke 50,000 livres. The marriage was broken off as far as Henri d'Albret was concerned.

On the 9th May we find that the French court went to Tours, and in the afternoon François I., having given Jeanne timely notice of the visit, took the Duke of Cleves to Plessis-les-Tours. He had instructed Jeanne as to what she should reply, and had spoken highly of the duke. Descurra says that Jeanne answered his Majesty with a great deal of cleverness, saying she was sure the king loved his niece too much to give her to the Duke of Cleves, and that she loved the king too much to accept the hand of a German prince, because she would then have no opportunity of seeing the king. His Majesty said, "You told me at Fontainebleau, in presence of your mother, that you would be glad to marry the Duke of Cleves. Why do you refuse now?" Jeanne: "I did not foresee the harm it might do to my father. If you wish to marry me, marry me in France. Rather than wed

¹ This letter reminds one of some lines in one of La Fontaine's fables—

“LE JARDINIER ET SON SEIGNEUR.

Petits princes, videz vos débats entre vous :
De recourir aux rois vous seriez de grands fous.
Il ne les faut jamais engager dans vos guerres,
Ni les faire entrer sur vos terres.”

the Duke of Cleves, I would prefer to go into a convent."

And after a long conversation, during which Jeanne remained firm, François I. flew in a passion, sent for Madame de Lafayette, the governess of the princess, and accused her of having inspired this resistance. The king then retired, and the Duke of Cleves paid a visit, which lasted a quarter of an hour, but what passed history sayeth not. The Cardinal de Tournon next had an interview with the princess, and gave her a lecture. She said that she was ready to obey the orders of the king, but that she would sooner die than wed the Duke of Cleves, which proves that his Serene Highness had not made a favourable impression. The day following, the Marshal Annebaut, who stood high in the good graces of the king, renewed the charge, but found that Jeanne had in no way changed her mind.

Two days after the visit of the king to Plessisles-Tours, the Spanish ambassador received a letter from Charles V. on the subject of Jeanne's marriage. Descurra set out for Pau to deliver it in person, and met Henri d'Albret, who was already on the road to Amboise, at Bordeaux. This letter, much to the annoyance of the King of Navarre, contained nothing definitive. Descurra endeavoured to explain away the hesitations of his imperial master, and tried to persuade Henri d'Albret to place his daughter beyond the reach of the French king. Descurra went on to Spain to see what could be

done there, and the King of Navarre continued his journey.

It is interesting to find that at this juncture three of the king's intimate counsellors were opposed to the union of Jeanne with the Duke of Cleves. The Cardinal of Lorraine thought it most imprudent, as the duke might become King of Navarre, and form an alliance with the emperor. Then, as a Churchman, he reminded François I. that it was not permitted to marry a girl against the consent of her father and mother. The Duchesse d'Estampes and Admiral Annebaut shared the opinions of the cardinal. The king was not to be convinced. He replied, "I must give the duke either my daughter or the Princess of Navarre, for it would not be right to send him away dissatisfied." His three advisers declared in favour of the king giving the duke the hand of his daughter Marguerite, and of keeping Jeanne for one of his sons, for the Dauphin—should Catherine de Medicis die—or for the Duke of Orleans.

The King and Queen of Navarre appear to have imagined that François I. would change his mind and follow this advice; but they were soon undeceived. Unable to resist the authority of the king, they pretended to be resigned to obey him. The contract had stipulated that the marriage should not be consummated, and that, in the opinion of the ecclesiastical authorities and of the Spanish ambassador, a marriage performed under such conditions might be annulled by a simple protestation.

The Duke of Cleves went as far as Poitiers to meet the King and Queen of Navarre, whose arrival was the signal for numerous and magnificent *fêtes*, at all of which Jeanne was present; but, as Baron de Ruble observes, she had not capitulated.. The King and Queen of Navarre had consented to an ostensible marriage to a mere ceremony; but, seeing the youth of the princess, they had been unable to explain this to their daughter, and hence her obstinacy. It was not until she had been nearly frightened out of her life, that she had been assured she would be the cause of the ruin of her father and mother and their house, that Marguerite d'Albret was able to obtain the consent of her daughter.

On the 13th June François I. entered Châtellerault with his Court; there were illuminations and other festivities. His Majesty had determined that the marriage should take place the next day. There was a grand ball, at which the Duke of Cleves is said to have distinguished himself, but at which the Princess of Navarre was not present. In fact, while the duke was dancing, the princess was engaged in consigning to parchment a protest against her marriage.

When the dancing was over, the King and Queen of Navarre and the princess their daughter entered, and François I. took the Duke of Cleves and the Princess of Navarre by the hand, and presented them to the Cardinal de Tournon, who affianced them; after which the king, according to custom in similar

cases, gave them some slight and amorous taps on the shoulders, "which greatly rejoice every one," says the Chancellor Olisleger.

Bordenave, in his *History of Bearn and Navarre*, and who wrote under the eyes of Jeanne, says that the Cardinal-de Tournon asked the princess three times if she would consent to marry the duke, and that on the third time she said, "Do not force me to answer." Bordenave adds that he had this from the lips of Jeanne d'Albret herself.

On the morning of the marriage Jeanne drew up another protest, "*Moi Jehanne de Navarre*," &c., in which she complained of being forced to marry by the queen her mother, and by Madame de Lafayette, &c. This protest, like the first, was countersigned by J. D'Arros, by Francisque Navarre, and Anaut Duguesse. Baron de Ruble is not at all sure that it was drawn up without the knowledge of François I.; and, in fact, his Majesty may have considered it prudent to retain the power of annulling a marriage in the event of his policy requiring such a measure. However this may be, Jeanne wrote her second protest, and such a protest in the eyes of the Catholic Church constitutes a valid reason for annulling a marriage. When Napoleon I. demanded that his marriage with Josephine should be annulled, one of the principal reasons upon which he grounded his plea for a dissolution of the matrimonial tie was non-consent—that he had reluctantly married his first wife.

The marriage took place, and the ceremony was one of no ordinary splendour. The king made his entry at eleven o'clock, followed by the court. The Queen Marguerite led her daughter into the pavilion where the wedding was to be celebrated. The Duke of Cleves was accompanied by the Dauphin and the princes. The ambassadors from Rome, England, Portugal, Venice, Saxony, Ferrara, and Mantua were present. The Spanish ambassador Bouvalot, although he had received a special invitation, was absent, nor would his presence at the ceremony have been approved of by his master, Charles V. The bride wore a crown of gold, and was so covered with jewels, says Brantôme, that she was unable to walk. Another version is that at the last moment she determined to resist, and refused to walk to the altar. However this may be, the king ordered the Constable Montmorency to carry her, or, as he expressed it, "to take his little niece by the neck;" and this the Constable did, much to the astonishment of the Court and to his own annoyance, for he considered himself degraded in the performance of such a task. After the ceremony there was a grand banquet, to which the bride and bridegroom, the king, queen, royal family, and court sat down; and among the guests were the Cardinals of Lorraine and Ferrara, the Duchesse d'Estampes, Diana of Poitiers, &c., &c. A ball and other festivities followed. The marriage, as had been stipulated, was not consummated. What happened is thus described by Bordenave—"Le soir, l'espous

fut mené en la chambre et au lict de l'espousée, auquel il mit l'un pié seulement en la présence de l'oncle et des père et mère de la fille et de tous les grands seigneurs et dames de la cour, qui ne bougèrent de là qu'ils n'eurent mis dehors le povre espous pour aller coucher ailleurs; ainsi il n'eut de tout ce mariage que du vent."

The day following the marriage there was a grand tournament, and money was squandered in such profusion that Sponde says, "the coronation of Charles V., celebrated in *fastes du luxe*, cost less than the nuptials of Jeanne d'Albret." In order to pay for all this useless display, a salt tax was raised in the provinces bordering the sea. The people resisted, the revolt was not quelled until oceans of blood had been shed, and the nuptials received from the people the significant name of *les noces salées*.

Negotiations followed all these festivities. The Duke of Cleves wished for a defensive alliance, trembling for Gueldres, &c. The King of France, on the other hand, advocated an offensive alliance, saying that he had not given the Duke of Cleves the hand of his niece for the sole pleasure of protecting his states. What he wanted was an alliance capable of smashing the power of the emperor. No agreement could be arrived at between the plenipotentiaries of the king and the duke, and matters were adjourned.

On the 20th June the duke left the French court and his bride; on the 25th he reached Orleans,

where he learned that Charles V. had brought the pretended rebellion of his vassal before the Diet. The Diet having lent a favourable ear to the explanations of the duke, he at once despatched the good news to the French king, to the Queen of Navarre, and to the Cardinal de Tournon. Seeing how matters were going in the Diet, Charles V. announced his intention of taking the affair into his own hands.

After spending a few days in Paris, where he was received with due honour, the duke started for Germany on the 1st July, and on the 3rd, curious to relate, we find him at the Castle of La Fère, belonging to Antoine de Bourbon, Duc de Vendôme, the future husband of his wife. All he remarked there was an aviary and a menagerie. Much apprehension was felt when the duke got into the Metz country lest he should fall into the hands of some of the Imperialists, who were scouring the country in search of him; however, he ultimately reached his own states in safety.

François I. appears to have suspected that the King of Navarre wished to carry off his daughter, and it was not until after a good deal of hesitation that Jeanne was allowed to return to her old quarters at Plessis-les-Tours. A friendly correspondence ensued between the principal parties concerned, and Jeanne wrote in affectionate terms to her husband, who often expressed his anxiety that she should join him; she, however, fell dangerously ill, time slipped by, and we once more find the agents of Charles V., Descurra

and others, renewing negotiations with the King of Navarre, whose confidence in François I. was once more at a low ebb.

Suddenly a complete change took place, the Constable Montmorency was disgraced, Cardinal de Tournon and Admiral Annebaut came into power; war was raging between emperor and king. François I. placed two armies in the field: the first, commanded by the Dauphin, was to invade Navarre; the second, under the order of the Duke of Orleans, was to succour the Duke of Cleves. Having heard that Charles V. himself was advancing at the head of an army, the French king left Lyons in order to meet his adversary in the field. He was received with delight in Guyenne by Henri d'Albret, who at once broke off negotiations with Spain. The darling project of his life appeared on the point of being realized. François I. promised that he would not lay down arms until he had restored Navarre to its rightful owner. Unfortunately the Dauphin, who had laid siege to Perpignan, was obliged to retire from before that place, and with his retreat vanished the prospect of conquering Navarre.

Things seemed brighter for the French in the north. The Duke of Cleves, who, by the way, was always demanding his wife, had received money and artillery from the French king, and was up and doing. An army under Antoine de Bourbon crossed the Flemish frontier and took the principal towns, while the force under the Duke of Orleans conquered

Luxembourg and a number of fortified places. After these achievements, however, the Duke of Orleans, thinking that a great battle was about to be fought between his father and the emperor, left his army, which after his departure went to pieces, and lost all its conquests.

At the close of 1542 the Duke of Cleves occupied a curious position. His conduct was not now approved of by the Diet, and yet Charles V. treated him with extraordinary forbearance for this reason. Henry VIII., it was rumoured, having disposed of Catherine Howard, was about to take back Anne of Cleves; the King of France recommended him to adopt this course, and his ambassador, Marillac, was ordered, on the condition of this scheme being carried out, to promise that the Duke of Orleans should marry a daughter of the English monarch. In the event of this arrangement being agreed to, the emperor would necessarily lose the support of England, unless he could win over the Duke of Cleves to his side, and, through his sister, Henry VIII. However, the combinations of François I. were frustrated; the King of England married Catherine Parr, and signed an offensive and defensive treaty with Charles V.

In April affairs wore a brighter aspect for the Duke of Cleves, who gained two decisive victories over the Imperialists, for which the Bishop of Paris sang a *Te Deum* at Nôtre Dame. Anxious to emulate the successes of the duke, the French king, at the head

of 35,000 mén, entered Hainault and seized upon Landrecies. He was accompanied by Jeanne d'Albret, the Cardinal de Tournon, Admiral Annebaut, the ambassador of the Duke of Cleves, and, in fact, by nearly all the persons who figured at the marriage negotiations. The French king announced his intention of escorting Jeanne to the frontiers of her states. Everything had hitherto gone well with the French and their allies, and it was boldly represented to François I. that Charles V. merely pretended to be highly incensed with the Duke of Cleves, in order to conceal his dread of that powerful noble.

Charles V. was always late in moving; it was not until the 20th August that he took the field. Once, however, the campaign opened his blows were rapidly dealt. On the 22nd he appeared before Dueren, and on the 23rd that town was carried by assault and handed over to pillage; but at the same time his Majesty commanded, on pain of death, that the churches should be spared, and that no woman or child should be touched. The town appears to have caught fire, and, in spite of all the efforts of the conquerors, to have been almost totally destroyed. A portion of the garrison, probably considered as deserters, was executed.¹ On the 27th Charles V. marched against Juliers, which, although as well fortified as Dueren, opened its gates without waiting for an assault. Other places fell in rapid succession,

¹ Robertson, in his *History of Charles V.*, t. iii. p. 250, says that all the inhabitants were put to the sword.

and on the 3rd September the emperor, after having received the submission of Gueldres and Cleves, marched to the attack of Venloo, which was the strongest and best armed place in the territory of the duke. The civil element wished to open the gates, the military element to defend the town to the last extremity. The Imperialists were about to open fire on the place, when the coadjutor of the Archbishop of Cologne and other ambassadors arrived in their camp, mediated between the Duke of Cleves and his suzerain, and implored the clemency of the emperor, who consented to receive his vassal. On the 7th September the culprit appeared before him, threw himself upon his knees, and was allowed by the emperor to remain for a long time in that humiliating posture. He signed a treaty by which he abandoned the French alliance, and handed over his states to the emperor, who restored him a portion of them as fiefs of the Holy Empire.

While this drama was being enacted, where was the King of France with his army? François I. had been wasting his time in feasting and hunting. He had only reached Sainte Menehould when he learned the capitulation of Dueren, and he was on the frontiers of Luxembourg when informed of the treaty of Vanloo.

It might have been supposed, that after the treaty of Vanloo little or nothing more would have been heard of the sham marriage performed at Châtellerault. This was not the case. The Duke of Cleves

had hardly affixed his signature to the treaty with Charles V., than he sent an ambassador to François I. to explain that he had been obliged to acknowledge the emperor as his rightful suzerain, that he desired to observe faithfully the treaty of Vanloo, that he renounced the French alliance, but not the hand of the Princess of Navarre, whom he had solemnly married. He offered to send a suitable embassy in search of her. As may be easily supposed, this demand greatly incensed the French king. The courtiers accused the duke of treason, entirely forgetting the pressure under which he had acted; and that François, had he shown greater activity, might have saved his quondam ally from falling into the clutches of the emperor. Robertson says that the Duke of Cleves was overwhelmed before the French showed any signs of coming to his aid.

The whole of France, with the exception of Jeanne d'Albret, is said to have been deeply afflicted on learning the disastrous tidings mentioned above. As for Jeanne, who was on the road to join her husband, she now considered herself free.

The French court sent a contemptuous reply to the Duke of Cleves, and at the same time a copy of the Papal Bull which accorded to the King of Navarre the right of disposing of the hand of his own daughter. The plea of non-consent and non-consummation was proposed by the Princesse Marguerite d'Angoulême. The Queen of Navarre rejected the demands of the duke's envoy, and

Jeanne wrote a letter, in which she declared that she had married "Monseigneur de Cleves" against her will.

In spite of this embassy to the French court, the Duke of Cleves was himself anxious to recover his freedom. Wishing to cement his new alliance, he asked the emperor to give him the hand of the Infanta Maria, or that of one of his nieces. He pointed out that his marriage with the Princess of Navarre had not been consummated, that it was nothing but a State pageant, and that Jeanne herself, in her letter to his envoy, Drimborn, had given him *congé* in good and due form and set him free.

The King of France took just the opposite view to that adopted by the Duke of Cleves. He wished to hold the duke to his engagements as regarded his alliance with France, and at the same time not to give him his niece.

After a sharp struggle, which exhausted both combatants, the king and the emperor signed a treaty of peace at Crespy in September, 1544. One of the clauses of this act ran thus—"Seeing that the Duke of Cleves has already demanded his wife as having married her legitimately, but that the said princess and her parents protest against this marriage, as contracted against their will; seeing the protests she has already made, the king will cause to be handed to the said emperor within six weeks the said protest in an authentic form," &c., &c.

There were other important clauses in this treaty.

Both parties were to restore all the conquests they had made since the treaty of Nice. First, the emperor was to give the Duke of Orleans his daughter, or the second daughter of Ferdinand; second, François I. was to give no aid to the exiled King of Navarre; third, both monarchs were to make war on the Turk; fourth, and by a private article, the Protestant heresy was to be stamped out.

With respect to the first clause, the emperor within a given period decided in favour of the Duke of Orleans marrying the second daughter of Ferdinand, with the Milanais for her dowry, and that marriage was on the point of being celebrated, when the Duke of Orleans died of a pestilential fever. His untimely end destroyed the balance of the treaty of Crespy, and if François I. had been a younger man, would have been the signal for a fresh war, for Charles V. kept the Milanais, and refused all compensation. As to the second daughter of Ferdinand, she was destined to be given to the Duke of Cleves, "as a proof," says Robertson, "of the sincerity of the emperor's reconciliation."

As regards clause number two, we shall shortly see how that was observed by the French king. It was infamous on the part of François I. to betray the Sultan, with whom he had formed a close alliance, to the great scandal of Christendom; it was also infamous on the part of both monarchs to enter into a secret treaty to root out heresy, after all they had done to gain the Protestant support.

The following despatch relating to the above events is published in the English *State Papers*—

WOTTON TO HENRY VIII.

“. . . M. de Granvele sent for me, and sayde that the Frenche king, seeing that thEmperour wold not heere of the mariaige of his eldist doughter, that the Frenche king requyrid his second doughter for Monsr. d'Orleans, and that the Emperour should marye the Frenche kings daughter. Whereunto (he sayde) answer was made that the Emperours second daughter was bestowidde by a crosse mariaige with Portugal; and that the Emperour, being yn France, had shewidde no cowntenance of enye favour to the Frenche kinges daughter, forbicause she should have no hope thereon; for, lyke as He then was not, so is He not yet myndidde to marye; so they concludid that that matter wold take none effecte; and therefor al though by mariaiges often tymes peaces were made, yet there wer other wayes yn vouge besydes; and willed the Frenche menne to open what other charge they had. 'Why,' quod thAdmirall, 'how can thEmperour better bestowe his daughter?'—'He cowde not, yn deede,' quod Granvele, 'yf she wer not bestowde al redye.'—'Well,' quod Annebault, 'make yow then summe overture your selfe.'—'Marye,' quod Granvele, 'we must entreate upon three thinges; of the Turke; of thEmperours satisfaction, and his frendes, as chiefiye the Kinge of England, and also the Duke of Savoye.'—'As for the Turke,' Annebault sayde, 'the Frenche kinge not onelye renonce his allyance, but also ayde to warre against hym.'

Nicholas Wotton concludes his letter in this quaint fashion—

“Written yn greate haste at the desloging of the armye, upon a hedge, this last day of August, 1544.”

We take it that when Wotton wrote the above despatch he was with the Imperial army in the neighbourhood of Château-Thierry, which town Charles V. had reached, and from whence he threatened Paris.

As Guizot says—"Champagne and Picardy were simultaneously invaded by the Germans and the English; Henry VIII. took Boulogne; Charles V. advanced to Château-Thierry. The terror was great. François I. hastened from Fontainebleau, and rode through the streets, accompanied by the Duc de Guise, everywhere saying, 'If I cannot prevent you from being afraid, I can prevent you from suffering any harm.' The population took courage, recovered confidence, and rose in a body; 40,000 militia-men in arms defiled before the king. The army arrived by forced marches, and took up its position between Paris and Château-Thierry. Charles V. was not rash; he fell back to Crespy. Negotiations were opened. François I., fearing lest the emperor should learn that Henry VIII. had captured Boulogne, and would raise his demands, hastened to accept the conditions of Charles V., only a little less hard than those of 1540. Charles V. yielded upon some special points, being, above all, anxious to secure the co-operation of François I. in the two great struggles in which he was engaged against the Turks in Eastern Europe, and against the Protestants in Germany."

When blamed for his alliance with the Sultan, the French king, says Guizot, replied to Marino Guistiniano, the Venetian ambassador—"I cannot deny that I greatly desire to see the Turk very powerful and ready for war, not for his own sake, for he is an infidel, but in order to weaken the power of the emperor, to put him to great expense, and to protect

all other governments against so redoubtable an enemy."

A great deal of difficulty was experienced in getting the religious tie, which united the Duke of Cleves and Jeanne d'Albret, annulled. Ecclesiastical doctors differed on the subject, and much canon law was called into requisition for and against the existence of any just cause for annulling the marriage. However, in the end, the Pope signed a brief, 12th October, 1545, by which the Duke and Jeanne were put asunder on the ground that violence had been used, and that there had been no consummation.

We must notice one more curious fact with regard to the Duke of Cleves—he had two sons, who both died without heirs, and the duchy of Cleves went to his daughters. The eldest married Albert Frederick of Brandenburg, and left behind her four daughters, whose husbands squabbled over the succession, and Henri IV., the son of Jeanne d'Albret, was just going to take the field in order to settle this dispute, when he was assassinated.

The marriage between the Duke of Cleves and Jeanne d'Albret having been declared null and void, there were three French princes who were in a position to pretend to her hand—the Dukes of Orleans and Vendôme, and the future Duke of Guise. However, Jeanne d'Albret had no sooner recovered her liberty, than the King of Navarre re-opened negotiations with Charles V. for her marriage. Philip had been married at Salamanca to the daughter of

the King of Portugal, and Henri d'Albret, therefore, offered Jeanne to the second son of Ferdinand, on the usual condition that the emperor would restore Navarre. Charles V. turned a deaf ear to these proposals, and his ambassador was instructed to say that he did not wish to enter into any negotiations unknown to the French king. In July, 1545, the Infant died. Three months after that event, as we have seen, Jeanne recovered her liberty, thanks to Paul III. Once more the King of Navarre attempted to secure the Spanish alliance. What happened at this juncture is thus described by Baron de Ruble—"The negotiations continued; other marriages were proposed. The Cardinal de Tournon and Admiral d'Annebaut proposed that the king's daughter Marguerite should marry the Duke of Savoy, and that Antoine de Bourbon should marry a daughter of Ferdinand. The Queen of Navarre, whose maternal ambition had been re-aroused by this rupture of the marriage of Châtellerault, aided the efforts of her husband. It was remarked that she was most attentive to the queen, the sister of Charles V., and thence it was concluded that she was negotiating the marriage of her daughter."

The Queen of Navarre was about to return to Bearn, and took advantage of a serious scandal to say that she wished to remove her daughter from the bad example set by the court, and to take her home; but François I. refused. One day he had a sharp altercation with Henri d'Albret; he still dreaded

the marriage of the heiress of Navarre with the Infant of Spain, and took no pains to conceal his suspicions. The King of Navarre replied, that had he wished to desert the French alliance there had been plenty of opportunities for so doing. In spite of all these protestations, François I. decided that Jeanne should remain at Plessis-les-Tours.

Henri d'Albret and his wife returned to Bearn, where their presence soon created considerable alarm in Spain. It was reported that the King of Navarre was making preparations for war, and, in fact, in 1546 he submitted to the French king a plan for suddenly seizing upon Pampeluna; and the attempt would probably have been made had the Spanish agents not got wind of what was brewing. Henri d'Albret was disappointed once more in his darling project of recovering Navarre.

"We are both mortal," wrote Henry VIII. to the French king in 1546. In January, 1547, Henry died, and on the 31st March of the same year François I. followed him to the tomb.

Shortly before his death François I. had once more taken up the idea of giving the hand of his niece to Antoine de Bourbon, and Henri II. on ascending the throne showed himself favourable to this alliance. He desired it both through friendship and policy. The King of Navarre, dissatisfied with the French king, had long retired from court, while the emperor was by no means friendly. It was highly desirable to draw closer the links between France

and Bearn. Antoine de Bourbon, if frivolous and weak, was a prince of the blood, and the nearest heir to the throne after the Valois line. He had shown remarkable military capacity under the eyes of Jeanne d'Albret in 1543, at the time of the defection of the Duke of Cleves. Brantôme says—"He was well born, brave, and valiant, for of this Bourbon race there is none otherwise, handsome, being well made, and much taller than his brothers, with majesty to boot, and fairly eloquent."

Henri II. had hardly ascended the throne, when he despatched the Cardinal d'Armagnac, one of the intimate friends of the house of D'Albret, on a secret mission to Bearn, and it really seemed as if Jeanne were about to be married at last. At this moment, however, a rival entered the lists in the shape of François de Lorraine, the eldest son of the Duc de Guise. Strange to say, seven years previously the two princes, Antoine de Bourbon and François de Lorraine, had been suitors for the hand of Vittoria Farnese, the niece of Paul III. Henri II. was undecided which suitor to choose. Diana of Poitiers, who exercised great influence over the new king, favoured the pretensions of François de Lorraine. Henri II. at first determined to await the arrival of Henri d'Albret in Paris for his coronation, but the King of Navarre had the gout, and could not travel; his Majesty then bethought him of consulting Jeanne herself on this important matter, and Jeanne decided in favour of Antoine de Bourbon.

The King of Navarre objected to both princes, but not daring openly to resist the French king, he resorted to the same tactics which had succeeded in the case of the Duke of Cleves; he asked for time, and obtained a respite of six months. He was not allowed to take his daughter away; she was kept a state prisoner at the court.

In the month of December, 1547, Henri II. reminded the King of Navarre of their agreement. Both the King and Queen of Navarre protested that their life and fortune were all at the service of their sovereign, but unfortunately his Majesty was ill, and could not for the moment repair to the Court of France. Henri II., being aware of the weak point of the King of Navarre, offered him 10,000 crowns a year to come to terms, but his Majesty resisted even this inducement.

Tired of struggling against so many difficulties, Henri II. thought of bestowing the hand of his sister Marguerite on Antoine de Bourbon by way of compensation. She was the most accomplished of princesses, and had earned for herself the nickname of Pallas. Madame Marguerite, however, resisted the wishes of the king, and declared that she would never marry any subject of her brother. It is supposed that the real reason for this refusal was the mutual affection which the princess knew to reign between Antoine de Bourbon and Jeanne d'Albret. She must have been aware that the daughter of Charles VII. had married Jean de Bourbon, and that

the daughter of Louis XI. had bestowed her hand upon Pierre de Bourbon, Sire de Beaujeu.

The state of affairs in 1547 was therefore this. Antoine and Jeanne were deeply in love with each other; the King of France desired the union, and the King and Queen of Navarre were both opposed to it. "Towards the end of summer," writes Baron de Ruble, "Descurra was at Madrid, where he was waiting for the Marquis de Mondejar, the former viceroy of the Spanish Navarre, already initiated into the preceding negotiations between the emperor and Henri d'Albret. Full of zeal, he asked Don Tristan d'Olsace, an agent from Bearn, for a portrait of Jeanne d'Albret, so as to show it to Philip. Instead of the marquis, two gentlemen from Bearn arrived, on the pretence of bringing to the court of Spain news from Germany. They visited the various royal and important persons at Madrid, feeling the ground, asking advice, and declaring everywhere that the King of France alone stood in the way of a marriage between Jeanne d'Albret and the Infant. These two gentlemen were suspected of being spies, and were sent home.

"Two months afterwards the King of Navarre sent Miguel d'Olite and Jacques de Foix, Bishop of Lescar; his Lieutenant-General, to Madrid. They had three conferences with Descurra, and revealed to him the pressure used by the King of France in favour of the Duc de Vendôme, and the secret resistance of their master, who up to that day had been able to

avoid entering into any engagement. The principal object of the commission was to offer to the King of Spain, at the same time, the hand of the heiress of Navarre, the entry into Bayenne, Dax, Bordeaux, and the whole of Guyenne. The great difficulty consisted in getting Jeanne out of France. Her habitual guardian, the Sire de Lavedau, was in favour of the Duc de Vendôme; but the Bishop of Lescar, a relative of his, flattered himself that he would be able to get round him. The bishop was to go to court, apparently to discuss the conditions of the marriage demanded by the king, but in reality to encompass the evasion of Jeanne. Before taking action, Henri d'Albret demanded a treaty, guaranteeing him his actual territory, and the restitution of the Spanish Navarre."

Very complicated negotiations ensued between Bearn and Madrid, during which time the King of France offered his sister Marguerite to Philip, and his daughter Elizabeth to Don Carlos. Under these circumstances poor Henri d'Albret seems to have offered his daughter's hand to the Prince of Piedmont; to this match Henri II. had strong objections.

In the middle of January, 1548, the King of Navarre received a pressing invitation to repair to the French court. He once more pleaded ill-health, but feeling that he would soon be obliged to go to Paris he implored Charles V. to give him a definitive answer. This answer was never received. It appears that both the emperor and his counsellors suspected

the good faith of Henri d'Albret—suspected that he and the French king were setting a snare for the emperor.

It is shown that at this period Charles V. entertained for Jeanne d'Albret the highest respect, and considered her well worthy of being his daughter-in-law. In a will which he made on the 18th January, 1548, he pointed her out to his son as a suitable wife, having "personal attractions, being virtuous and well brought up, and he advised his son to marry her under certain conditions, in default of the sister of the King of France, on condition of a renunciation of all claims on Navarre, and provided the princess can be got away from France," &c.

But Philip was destined not to marry the Protestant heiress of Navarre, but first the Bloody Queen Mary of England, and then the Princess Elizabeth of France.

Matters were allowed to slumber until the autumn, when Henri II., probably made aware of the fresh negotiations with Spain, determined that the marriage between Jeanne and the Duc de Vendôme should at once be celebrated. The ceremony was to have been performed on the return of the court to St. Germain, at the same time as that between François de Lorraine, Duc d'Aumale, and a princess of the house of Este. Suddenly Henri II. decided that the wedding should take place at Moulins; a reluctant assent was wrung from the King of Navarre, and the Queen of Navarre is said to have watered with her tears the contract she was obliged to sign.

The Venetian ambassador has left us a description of the old feudal castle which the Dukes of Bourbon had built at Moulins in the fifteenth century. Andrea Navagero wrote that it was "a magnificent palace, built in the guise of a fortress, with fine gardens, forests, fountains, and all kinds of sumptuosities worthy of the dwelling of a prince. The park, which contained a large quantity of birds and beasts, is in part a desert. There remain, however, fraucolins, turkeys, quantities of partridges, and various kinds of parrots.

We are told that Henri d'Albret delayed obeying the king's orders as long as possible, and that when he at last set out to join the court, he travelled by easy stages, hoping that the couriers of the emperor would overtake him, and that the marriage with Antoine de Bourbon might yet be averted. He was disappointed; no couriers were sent after him. When he arrived at Moulins he was still bent on resisting the king, but Henri II. insisted on the marriage in a manner which defied opposition. In order to console his uncle, he promised to recover Navarre for him, but Henri d'Albret had lost all faith in such promises, and instead of the very problematic restoration of Navarre, he ended by accepting an annual sum of 15,000 francs. Henri II., evidently enchanted with this arrangement, wrote at once to the Constable Montmorency, saying—"Quant à se quy me touche jan suis quyte à bon marché: je luy balle seulement quinze mille frans tous les anes pour le couverement

de son réaume." This certainly was getting cheaply out of the affair; but what is to be thought of Henri d'Albret's sacrifice for such a mess of pottage? And to think that this annuity was paid only once!

The marriage-contract was duly drawn up and signed, and in this document it was stipulated that the eldest son should inherit the kingdom of Navarre, and the property of both houses, and that he should join to the arms of the house of D'Albret the *fleurs de lys* of the Bourbons.

The marriage was celebrated on the 20th October, 1548, if not with the same pomp and splendour as Jeanne's first marriage, or as if it had been performed as at first intended, at St. Germain's, with royal magnificence.

Strange as it may appear, authorities differ widely as to the personal charms of the bride. According to one, she had large glands and king's evil. The historiographer of Navarre declares that she was one of the loveliest princesses of Europe, and that she had dark hair. Nicholas Bourbon says she had red hair, and her portraits make out that she had fair hair. There was something firm and penetrating in her glance, and what was worth more, she was endowed with great moral qualities, which made up for any physical defect if such existed.

In honour of the marriage Ronsard, then in his youth, wrote an epithalameum, commencing thus—

Quand mon prince épousa
Jeanne, divine race,

Que le ciel compousa
Plus belle qu'une grace,
Les princesses de France,
Ceintes de lauriers verts,
Toutes d'une cadence
Lui chautèrent ses vers :
O Hymen, Hyménée,
Hymen, O Hyménée.

Jeanne appeared delighted with her marriage—delighted, after having so long been made the sport of so many political combinations, to find herself the wife of a man to whom she had given her affections. There was one person who was inconsolable—that excellent princess Marguerite d'Angoulême. She had been almost deserted by her husband, and now she saw her only daughter wedded to a man in whose character she had little confidence. As for Henri d'Albret, he took a more philosophic view of the matter, and, once the marriage over, pretended to approve of it.

We need merely add here, that when Charles V. heard of Jeanne's marriage he assembled the States-General of Navarre at Pampeluna, and had his son proclaimed King of Navarre. The province over which there had been so much squabbling was definitively incorporated with Spain; not that Henri d'Albret was inclined even after this solemn act to give it up for lost.

CHAPTER IX.

ANTOINE DE BOURBON.

IN his genealogical history of France, Ste. Marthe says that in 1547 the House of Bourbon was divided into two branches—those of Vendôme and Montpensier. The first was composed of five princes—Antoine, Duc de Vendôme; Charles, who became a cardinal, and was afterwards recognized as king by the League; Jean, Comte d'Enghien; Louis I., Prince de Condé; and Louis, Cardinal de Bourbon, their paternal uncle. The second branch was composed of the Duc de Montpensier and his brother, the Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon. Of all these princes the eldest alone had a fortune worthy of his rank; there was nothing left for the others but to marry wealthy heiresses. Nor were their hopes vain, says Desormeaux. The eldest scion of this illustrious house married Jeanne d'Albret, who brought her husband immense wealth [?]. The Comte d'Enghien married the Duchesse d'Estourville, and the Prince de Condé the rich heiress Eléonore de Roye, and afterwards Françoise d'Orleans. The Duc de Montpensier married Jacqueline de Longuy, and the Prince de

la Roche-sur-Yon the widow of Marshal Montejean, a woman of great wealth. This prince had desired to marry Claude de Rieux, the heiress of the House of Laval, but the lady preferred Coligny d'Andelot, and hence a duel which made much noise at the time, and might have had serious consequences for Coligny, who had dared to cross swords with a prince of the blood. It was thanks to the influence of his uncle, Marshal Montmorency, that he escaped the punishment due to this crime. Brantôme, who refers at length to this incident in his *Discours sur les Duels*; blames the prince for having under the circumstances insulted a man of the rank of D'Andelot.

By the marriage of the Prince de Condé with Eléonore de Roye, the Bourbons became allied with the powerful houses of Montmorency, Coligny, and Larochefoucauld.

According to Desormeaux, the bride belonged to one of the most ancient and illustrious houses of the kingdom; she yielded the palm of beauty, grace, wit, and virtue to none of her sex, and she was their superior in the matter of instruction, courage, and magnanimity; she was the niece of the Colignys, and like them, she embraced the doctrines of Calvin, and afterwards became one of the heroines of the party of which her husband was declared the leader.

We must turn now to Antoine de Bourbon, the successful suitor of Jeanne d'Albret. At the age of nineteen Antoine succeeded his father, inheriting his estates, his honours, and his appointments. He soon

displayed a taste for dissipation and for luxury. He was the intimate friend of the Dauphin, afterwards Henri II. He was of a prepossessing appearance, and though he soon distinguished himself in the field as a soldier, he was nonchalant to a degree. Such was the great noble to whom Jeanne d'Albret gave her heart and her hand. The chief objection which the King of Navarre had to the Duc de Vendôme was the facility with which he squandered money. His Majesty himself was of the most parsimonious disposition. The duke promised reform, but it is related that his father-in-law, not placing implicit confidence in his word, went to his house the day after the marriage, and drove out a number of the duke's retainers with his cane.

The fortune of the Duc de Vendôme was anything but large; the House of Bourbon had been ruined by the confiscations which followed the treason of the Constable in 1523. After the marriage, however, Henri II. behaved in a very liberal manner to the young couple, while the Queen of Navarre abandoned a large sum of money to them.

Henri d'Albret had hardly got back to Pau after the marriage than he resumed his negotiations with the emperor, to whom he could no longer offer the hand of his daughter. Charles V. still suspected the sincerity of Henri d'Albret, and he wrote thus to his ambassador, St. Mauris—"As for the communications you have had with the sire D'Albret, you must take great care not to tell him anything which, being

repeated to the king, can rouse his suspicions, for the said sire D'Albret is hardly less changeable than the said king, and the lady D'Albret is still more dangerous." And the emperor at once began to fortify his frontiers, especially in the direction of Navarre.

The presence of the Duc de Vendôme at Pau soon increased the apprehensions of Charles V. It was naturally supposed that he would espouse the quarrel of his father-in-law, and it was feared that he would induce Henri II. to make a dash across the border. For a whole year the most disquieting rumours poured into Madrid, and the alarm of the emperor was hardly to be appeased by the assurances of so astute a diplomatist as Simon Renard, who several times declared that there was nothing to dread.

We now come to a very curious incident, which is thus related by Baron de Ruble¹—"In the month of March, 1549, while Henri d'Albret was at Pau, the Bishop of Lescar invited Descurra to Bearn. Descurra, out of employment since the marriage of Jeanne, was living at Pampeluna in the service of the Viceroy of Spanish Navarre. With the authorization of his master he started for Pau, and arrived on the 11th March at half a league from that town. Introduced secretly the same evening into the castle, he waited until 11 p.m. for an audience; which the king did not grant. The bishop promised that he would arrange a meeting for the next day. Again Descurra was disappointed, and saw only the bishop.

¹ *Antoine de Bourbon and Jeanne d'Albret*, vol. i. p. 19.

He confided the most surprising secret to him. The King of Navarre, he said, had been deceived by the King of France in the affair of the marriage of his daughter. As he knew that he would never consent to it, the marriage had been secretly celebrated and consummated three months before his arrival at the court, and therefore he had returned to Bearn thirsting for vengeance. The Duc de Vendôme, his son-in-law, jealous of the Montpensiers and the Guises, had promised to take up arms, and obtain the support of a portion of France."

It is not said how these overtures were received, but the next day the bishop had another interview with Descurra, and offered him the estates which the Duc de Vendôme possessed in Flanders, together with 3000 silver ducats in exchange for Spanish Navarre. Negotiations upon this basis were continued for a year, and at last, in March, 1550, the propositions of Henri d'Albret were rejected.

The year previous the Queen of Navarre, better known as Marguerite d'Angoulême, and called by Michelet "the pure elixir of the Valois," died broken-hearted; she had been deserted by her husband, and had seen her daughter wed a man in whom she had no confidence. The praises of that estimable princess have been written and sung so often that we need hardly allude to her character here further than to quote the few following lines from an oration pronounced over her tomb—"Marguerite de Valois, sœur unique du roy François, était le soutien et appui de

bonnes lettres, et la défense, le refuge et reconfort des personnes désolées.”

It is curious to find, that no sooner was the Queen of Navarre dead and buried than matrimonial intrigues similar to those which had so long disturbed the repose of Jeanne d'Albret, and had given so much employment to the sovereigns of France and of Spain, recommenced. Henri d'Albret was hardly free when he began to talk of forming a new alliance. His marriage with Marguerite of France was spoken of at the court, but the sister of Henri II. appears to have refused her uncle's hand. Sir John Masone, writing to the council on the 3rd August, 1550, mentions a report that the Dowager Queen of Scotland was to marry the King of Navarre (she was then expected in France), and also that the Lady Margaret had refused his Majesty. The British ambassador made no further mention of these rumours, which in fact were merely gossip.

It appears that in 1550 Charles V. was suffering from the pangs of remorse, or at least he ordered his son, by a secret clause in his will, “to examine and to verify as soon as possible, and sincerely, if, in reason and justice, he ought to restore the kingdom of Navarre, or to furnish compensation for it.” This order, given by Charles V. to his successor, Philip II., was duly transmitted by Philip II. to Philip III., and by Philip III. to his successors. “Such was the reparation which the Catholic kings imagined in order to tranquillize their consciences.”

Great preparations were soon being made for war, which was several times on the point of breaking out, and Antoine de Bourbon at the head of an army was manœuvring on the Spanish frontier. At this critical juncture fresh negotiations, upon whose initiative is not certain, were opened up between the emperor and Henri d'Albret. The old game was to be played over again. The King of Navarre demanded the hand of the emperor's niece, whom we have already mentioned as Christine of Denmark, who first wedded Maximilian Sforza, Duke of Milan, then the Duke of Lorraine, and who was once more a widow. This princess was to bring as her dowry Spanish Navarre; if sons were born they were to reign to the detriment of Jeanne; Henri d'Albret was to aid the emperor to invade France, giving him as a guarantee of his good faith the towns of Sauveterre and Mont-de-Marsan. Charles V. directed his son to pursue this negotiation, but Philip appears to have treated the propositions of the King of Navarre with real Spanish indifference, sometimes taking up negotiations, and then allowing them to slumber for months.

In September, 1551, Jeanne was brought to bed of a son. Sir John Masone announced this happy event to the Council in a despatch written from Amboise, 29th April. He said—"The Princess of Navarre is with child (meaning child born), to the great rejoicing of the whole house of Vendôme. The King of Navarre has settled four hundred francs a year on the bearer who brought the news from his

daughter, and on his heirs for ever. The Duke of Vendôme is still with his father-in-law, not far from the frontier; and it is thought that if the emperor is not encumbered with the Turk, there shall be some exploit for the recovery of Navarre." But Henri d'Albret was trying to recover the lost territory on other terms, nor would the fact of the emperor not being encumbered by the Turk have been advantageous to him in any case.

On the eve of the birth of the child of Antoine de Bourbon and Jeanne d'Albret, who received the title of the Duc de Beaumont, the Duchesse d'Anjou, better known as Catherine de Medicis, was brought to bed of a child, who afterwards reigned as Henry' III., and was the last of his line. This child, born in September, 1551, had Edward VI. and Antoine de Bourbon for godfathers, and Jeanne d'Albret for godmother.

Antoine de Bourbon and Jeanne were now separated for some time, the Duke having gone campaigning. Their letters, recently published by the Marquis de Rochambeau, show that they lived on the most affectionate terms.

We may mention here that Sir Richard Morysine, writing to Cecil from Augsburg, 12th May, 1551, said—"It is reported that the King of Navarre is dead, and that Mons. Vendôme, husband to the daughter, and heir of Navarre, means to seek possession of the whole kingdom, his father-in-law during his whole life having had only portions of it. The French ambassador says that he has not heard of the king's

death ; but if he is, M. de Vendôme has as good a title to the whole kingdom as the emperor has to Flanders. Because the King of Spain has no other title to Navarre except that when the *Bishop of Rome* had excommunicated the king thereof, the King of Spain as *Rex Catholicus*, entered upon the realm, which now, by curse of the bishop, is not his that was the right owner, but his that by violence could catch it. Thus the old doctrine serves well, that a realm may be kept from the right owner, and no grudge of conscience in the matter. Cannot see what kind of robbery can carry men to hell if it be lawful for any to steal kingdoms. This talk may be spread to see what will be said of it, and perhaps, if the king be not dead, things upon occasion may be attempted which now break out in talk.”¹

And, in fact, the King of Navarre was not dead, but had a few more years to live and intrigue. It is well to note the opinion which good Sir Richard had of the emperor's claims to Navarre, and of predatory practices in general.

On the 20th August, 1553, the little Duc de Beaumont, whose birth had been hailed with such delight, died, to the great grief of his parents, and the indignation of his grandfather, Henri d'Albret, who accused his daughter of having neglected her child. As Jeanne was in a fair way to become a mother again, the King of Navarre insisted that she should repair to Bearn to be confined, and he threatened to

¹ *Calendar of State Papers—Edward VI.*, No. 343.

disinherit his son-in-law should he refuse. On the night of the 13th December, 1553, Jeanne d'Albret was delivered of another son in the middle of a song, which, in obedience to her father, she began to sing when the pains of childbirth seized her. The child is said to have come into the world without uttering a cry. His grandfather wrapped him up in the corner of his dressing-gown, rubbed his lips with garlic, and gave him a few drops of Jurançon wine, which the infant appeared to relish. The Spaniards, when Jeanne was born, had said, in allusion to the coat of arms of the House of D'Albret—"Behold a miracle—the cow has brought forth a sheep." The King of Navarre, remembering his taunt, now retorted in his joy—"See, this sheep has given birth to a lion."

On the 6th March, 1554, the young prince was christened by the Cardinal d'Armagnac. He had for godfathers the King of Navarre and the Cardinal de Vendôme, and for godmother Isabeau d'Albret, the widow of the Duc de Rohan. He received the name of Henri, and, what was more significative, the title of Prince of Viana. This title had long been borne by the heirs of Navarre, but Viana lay in that portion of Navarre which Charles V. had definitively annexed when he heard of Jeanne's marriage. The tortoise-shell cradle of the prince is still to be seen at Pau; it escaped the fury of the revolutionary mob which shattered the bottle containing the ampoula, or oil with which the French kings were anointed at Rheims on their coronation; which destroyed the shirt of St.

Louis, the felt hat of Joan of Arc, and other harmless relics. No thanks to the mob, for a sham cradle substituted for the real one was smashed to pieces in 1793, and publicly burned. We may further note that the young prince had no less than eight wet nurses one after the other, and that the names of six of these are faithfully preserved in the chronicles of Pau.

During this time—that is to say, during 1553 and the beginning of 1554—the King of Navarre had been actively engaged in negotiating with Spain; he had a formidable force at his command; Antoine de Bourbon was considered a consummate soldier, and Spain was in a state of great exhaustion.

“In the spring of 1554,” says Baron de Ruble, “Descurra returned to Pau. He found Henri d’Albret of the same mind as regarded the Spanish alliance; he did not insist so strongly on the restitution of Navarre, but he wished to marry a princess of the Imperial house. He rejected the daughters of Ferdinand, King of the Romans, who were too young and already engaged, and Christine de Lorraine, who had not replied to his proposals. He demanded the hand of the Donna Juana, the daughter of Charles V., the widow, since the month of January, of John King of Portugal. Descurra, in the name of the Spaniards, subscribed to the treaty; he proposed to keep the marriage clause a secret, but insisted on obtaining the approbation of the Duc de Vendôme, in as far as the alliance was concerned.

On the 19th February, 1555, Jeanne d’Albret gave

birth to another son, who was the victim of a sad and curious accident. A gentleman of the household and his nurse were engaged in passing the infant to each other from one window to another when they let it fall, and a few days afterwards the poor little Comte de Marle expired, to the great grief of his parents, who lost two sons out of three.

In 1555 the chequered existence of Henri d'Albret came to a close. All his schemes for the recovery of Navarre proved fruitless. This ruling passion was so strong in death, that a few days before his end he talked of leaving his bed to take the command of an army which was to invade Spain. The deceased monarch was succeeded by Antoine de Bourbon, who soon showed himself intent upon carrying out the policy of his father-in-law, who used to say that a feeble king between two great powers was like a flea between two monkeys—that no sooner had he left one than he was caught by the other.

One is tempted to make a few reflections on matrimonial alliances. Of what value are they? Here was Henri d'Albret, who had married the sister of the King of France, yet he never could depend on the French alliance; to strengthen that alliance Henri II. had forced him to give his daughter to a French prince. The relations between the two countries were drawn no closer by this second marriage. Both Henri d'Albret and Antoine de Bourbon after him were always ready to betray France on the promise of receiving Navarre as the price of their treason. And the two great and

rival powers between which the little mutilated kingdom of Navarre enjoyed a precarious existence were united by marriage, François I. and Charles V. being brothers-in-law.

Antoine de Bourbon was in France when Henri d'Albret died. The fatal news seems to have reached him at Fontainebleau, whither he had gone to see the French king. Before the new sovereign of Navarre could take possession of his throne the courtiers of Henri II. impressed on the mind of that monarch that it would be dangerous to have so powerful a vassal on his borders, and the French king, following the advice of his ministers, proposed to Antoine de Bourbon, that in exchange for Bearn, which was always menaced by Spain, he should accept certain domains lying in France. Not daring to refuse openly Antoine returned an evasive reply; said that he could not dispose of the states without the consent of his wife, and when Jeanne d'Albret was appealed to, she answered that it would be necessary before making the transfer to obtain the consent of their subjects, and to release them from their oath of allegiance. Henri II. consented to this arrangement, and Antoine de Bourbon set out for Pau. Neither Jeanne d'Albret nor her husband seems to have had the slightest intention of consenting to the exchange proposed, and of abdicating the royal title. So far from that, the new king soon showed himself as determined as his predecessor to reconstitute the kingdom of Navarre in its integrity.

The new king and queen were received with transports of joy at Bearn, where the Chambers, however, at first refused to take the oath of allegiance to Antoine. Jeanne d'Albret soon persuaded them to alter their decision, representing to the Chambers that the husband is lord and master over the person and property of the wife, and that she herself recognized Antoine d'Bourbon as her lord and master.

Ancient privileges were confirmed, no changes were made in the mode of government, nor were the counsellors who took part in the schemes for a matrimonial alliance between Henri d'Albret, first with Christine of Lorraine and then with Juana of Portugal, punished, although either alliance would have compromised the chance of Antoine de Bourbon and his wife to the throne.

In the middle of November the King and Queen of Navarre with the Prince of Bearn set out for Paris, where they were received with all the honours due to their rank. Henri II. was peculiarly gracious, and actually spoke to Antoine de Bourbon of a match between the little Prince de Bearn and his daughter Marguerite. But of this anon.

We have mentioned that Antoine de Bourbon continued the policy of his father-in-law in attempting to obtain the restoration of Spanish Navarre. Very tempting propositions were offered by Spain in the course of his negotiations with that country, and at one moment the question of dismembering France was seriously discussed. Antoine de Bourbon was to be

declared king of that country, and Spain was to have Gascony, Languedoc province, and some of the forts on the Flemish frontier. When these schemes proved abortive others were suggested, such as a matrimonial alliance between Spain and Navarre, the Prince de Bearn to marry the daughter of Philip II. and Mary of England—daughter not born, and not destined to be born. On his side Antoine de Bourbon varied his demands; now he insisted upon Navarre, and then he would be satisfied with the duchy of Milan or the kingdom of Naples. But there was always some unlucky hitch in the negotiations. The fact is that each negotiator doubted the good faith of the other, and that neither would take the first step. Antoine de Bourbon wished to be put in possession of Milan before performing his part of the contract, while Philip II. and “brother Charles” wished him to hand over his strong places first in the guise of hostages. The Spanish king was afraid too that Antoine might not be able to hold his own in Milan, which might be lost to both Spain and Navarre. On the 13th April, 1557, Philip II. wrote from London pointing out the above contingency, and adding that he had perfect confidence in the good faith of Vendôme, and that he would cede him Milan if he would place his two sons and his strong places in his hands directly Milan was handed over to him. A month afterwards Charles V. withdrew this concession, and everything was to be recommenced. New plots and secret negotiations were to be opened between the conspirators.

In March, 1558, we find the King and Queen of Navarre in Paris for the nuptials of the Dauphin and Mary Stuart, the daughter of James V. of Scotland and Marie de Guise of the house of Lorraine.

Two memorable incidents occurred during this year. Charles V. and Mary Queen of England died. Philip II. lost both his father and his wife. In the *Memoirs of Vieilleville* we find that that minister, when he heard of the illness of Mary Tudor, despatched a monk to Philip to propose that he should marry the eldest daughter of Henri II., Elizabeth de Valois. Philip received this overture kindly, and the French King promised his daughter in case "fortune" should happen to the Queen of England. Mary was spared the pain of being made acquainted with these propositions, which had one good effect, they led to the conclusion of a truce between France and Spain at the moment when a collision between two large armies, commanded by renowned captains, was imminent. As was usual, every time that his two powerful neighbours made up their differences, the King of Navarre trembled for his safety.

When peace was concluded between France and Spain, Antoine de Bourbon, who little thought that his descendants would one day reign over both countries, was so indignant that he refused to be present at the marriages by which it was cemented. The daughter of Henri II., Madame Elizabeth, was given in wedlock to the King of Spain—his third wife.

She had formerly been betrothed to Philip's son, the unfortunate Don Carlos. The French king's sister, too, Marguerite, was to marry the Duke of Savoy, who had just inflicted so crushing a defeat on the French arms at St. Quentin.

This peace was not only a death-blow to the hopes of Antoine de Bourbon as regarded Upper Navarre, he began to tremble for Bearn and what remained of his little kingdom, and in 1560 we find him imploring the protection of France, as a short time before he had been imploring the protection of the emperor. He was altogether in a pitiable plight between the devil and the deep sea. What if the two powerful monarchs whom he had alternately offered to betray should turn upon him? His father-in-law had long sought to secure the alliance of France or of Spain by offers of the hand of his daughter. Antoine de Bourbon resorted to a similar expedient with the little Prince of Bearn.

In honour of the two royal marriages there were to be great festivities at the French Court. It was in the course of these festivities that Henri II., who was an accomplished knight, met his death from the lance of Montgomery. All attempts to persuade the king not to enter the lists had proved vain, and when Montgomery wished to be excused the honour of breaking a lance with him his Majesty flew in a rage. Vieilleville, remembering the prophecy of Nostradamus, felt full of apprehension as he aided the king to put on his armour. Nostradamus had written—

“Le lion jeune le vieux surmontera
En champ bellique par singulier duel ;
Dans cage d’or les yeux lui crèvera ;
Deux playes une, puis mourir mort cruelle.”

The “young lion” Montgomery was twenty years younger than Henri II., the “golden cage” was his Majesty’s helmet, and it was in the eye that the unfortunate monarch was wounded to death. According to De Thou, Brantôme, and Estoire, other prophets had foretold the violent death of the king. Everything was done to save the life of the wounded monarch. Four criminals had been decapitated the evening before the accident. What remained of Montgomery’s lance was run into the four heads which were afterwards dissected, so that the real nature of the wound might be revealed. The King of Spain sent Andrew Versale from Brussels to try and save the monarch about to be his father-in-law. On the fourth day a violent fever set in, and the king on recovering consciousness sent for the queen, Catherine de Medicis, and ordered her to have the nuptials between his sister Marguerite and the Duke of Savoy celebrated at once. On the 8th July the ceremony was performed by torchlight in the little church of St. Paul. The queen was present, bathed in tears. The king was on the point of death. Never was there a more melancholy wedding.

Antoine de Bourbon spent the last months of the reign of Henri II. at Bearn. He was so dissatisfied with the peace of Cateau-Cambresis that he sulked

with the French Court, so wrath with Spain that he allowed Calvinist ministers to preach throughout his kingdom, while he himself on Easter day 1559 received the sacrament in the reformed church of Pau, and two days later in a private house. Jeanne d'Albret followed the example of her husband. They had to complain of the whole Catholic party, of the Pope, of his most Christian Majesty the King of France, of his most Catholic Majesty the King of Spain, and of the Guises who had become all powerful in France. Marguerite d'Angoulême had protected the Calvinists, but Paul IV. said of Jeanne d'Albret that "the daughter is worse than the mother, and has infected the whole house of Vendôme."

After having sought the alliance now of the King of France, now of the King of Spain, Antoine de Bourbon turned to Queen Elizabeth of England, and we shortly afterwards find her Majesty, on the advice of Cecil, writing to the duke,¹ who had several secret interviews with Throckmorton on the subject of a Protestant alliance.

In the month of September the new king, François II., was crowned at Rheims, and at this ceremony the Duke of Orleans, who was afterwards Charles IX., the Duke of Angoulême who was afterwards Henri III., and the King of Navarre walked abreast. In spite of this we are assured that "both the King of Navarre and the Prince de Condé were regarded like those illustrious prisoners who added splendour to

¹ Vide *State Papers of the Reign of Elizabeth*.

ancient triumphs." Shortly after the coronation the King of Navarre appears to have obtained permission to go and see his sister Marguerite who was dying. Such was the anomalous position of Antoine de Bourbon, who was King of Navarre, who held the first rank in France after the king and his brothers, and who was looked upon in England as so powerful that Queen Elizabeth negotiated with him, hoping with his aid to recover Calais, as he hoped with her aid to recover Navarre. And yet this powerful vassal had to crave permission to visit his sister on her deathbed. The existence of Antoine, too, was extremely varied. He had no sooner recovered from a terrible fright caused by Philip II. offering "his life and an army of 40,000 men in order to quell dissension in France, and to put down heresy," when he was asked to conduct Queen Elizabeth, the sister of the French king, to the Spanish frontier. When expecting Philip at every moment to invade his states and drive him from his throne, at the instigation of Catherine de Medicis he was invited to escort Philip's bride to her new country.

For various reasons some delay took place in the departure of Elizabeth. First of all came forty days' mourning for the late king, during which nothing could be done, and then came other causes of delay merely hinted at in diplomatic documents. At last the bride set out. She was met by the King of Navarre at the border of his government in

Angoumois, and was escorted first to Bordeaux and then on to Bearn. She reposed for several days at Pau. Everywhere she was received with the greatest splendour, Antoine being desirous of propitiating the King of Spain. The queen left Pau on the 24th of December, 1559, accompanied by the King of Navarre, the Cardinal de Bourbon, the Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon, the young Prince of Bearn, and a numerous retinue. After resting for a day at St. Jean-Pied-de-Port the party set out for Roncevaux in the most inclement weather.

Antoine de Bourbon, who clung to the idea of recovering Spanish Navarre with the same tenacity as his father-in-law Henri d'Albret had done, objected to Roncevaux, where the Queen Elizabeth was to be handed over to the Spanish commissioners, being styled the Spanish frontier. Roncevaux was in Upper Navarre, and he had never renounced his claim to that province. Of course all he could do was to oblige the Spanish commissioners, much against their will, to make a note of this objection. It appears that during the ceremony at Roncevaux, Elizabeth, who repugnantly married the father of Don Carlos, suddenly remembering the young prince to whom she had at first been destined, fainted in the arms of the Queen of Navarre. We are also assured that the Queen of Spain never forgot the kindness and magnificence with which she had been treated by the King of Navarre, and that she proved her gratitude afterwards by saving the widow

of Antoine de Bourbon and her son from the most tragic destiny.¹ Sad was the fate of this unfortunate princess, who seems to have done nothing to deserve her harsh treatment and violent death.

Favin remarks as curious, that "from all time the Infantas of Spain married in France have been well treated by our kings, and on the contrary the French princesses married in Spain have, for the most part, died of poison or bad treatment." And the historian gives a pretty long list of these victims, beginning with Clothe, the daughter of Clovis, who married Amalaric, King of Spain. She sent her handkerchief, covered with blood, to her brother, who invaded Spain to avenge her. Then follow Ingoude, Rigoude, and many other unfortunates, down to Elizabeth, who, according to Favin, was poisoned by her husband, who before she died paid her a visit, already dressed in deep mourning, and condoled with her on her approaching end.

Once more the King of Navarre attempted to open negotiations with the King of Spain. He so far humbled himself as to ask his Majesty to permit him to pay him a visit in company with Jeanne d'Albret, in order to kiss his hand. His overtures were received with haughty contempt, and to his great vexation he and Jeanne d'Albret were styled Monsieur and Madame de Vendôme, nor would Philip II. ever admit of any other King of Navarre than himself.

In a letter from Guido Giannetti to the Queen,

¹ During the St. Bartholomew.

Venice, 21st December, 1560, we find that—"the King of Navarre complained that the services of himself and his house had been ill requited, and that although he had held certain opinions in matters of religion he nevertheless wished to be Catholic and obedient to the Apostolic See, and that therefore, as King of Navarre, he sent his ambassador to render public obedience to the Pope. He had, moreover, caused one of his men to be taken by the Lords of Guise as being the promoter of a sect in communion with Geneva. Vargas, the Ambassador of Spain, had objected to the acceptance of the obedience, asserting that the King of Spain is King of Navarre, and not Anthony, Duke of Vendôme, nor Jeanne d'Albret his wife; but the Pope decided to accept the obedience, with the protest that it be without prejudice to the King of Spain. The King of Navarre feared to lose the inheritance of his wife, on the borders of Spain, and his own patrimony adjoining, on account of the hostility of the Guises, and the offer of the aid of the King of Spain, by means of Don Antonio of Toledo, against the rebellious French.

THROCKMORTON TO CECIL.

"31st December, 1560.

"2. The House of Guise does presently bear small rule; the continuance and hope they have is in the King of Spain, who for religion and other respects will help their credit. The principal managing of affairs is with the Queen-Mother, the King of Navarre, and the Constable." ¹

¹ François II. died in June, 1560.

We then see that Queen Elizabeth was recommended to write kind letters to Catherine de Medicis (Madam Serpent as she used to call her), the King of Navarre, and the Constable Montmorency.

The letter of the queen to the queen mother of France was thus drafted—

“Condoles on the death of the late king, and congratulates on the accession of the present king (Charles IX.). Is specially glad to be informed by the English ambassador of the queen’s desire to reform abuses in religion at present so rife, and to endeavour to re-unite Christendom, on which heads the ambassador will communicate with her more fully.”

The two other letters were to a similar effect.

THROCKMORTON TO THE QUEEN OF NAVARRE.

“20th January, 1561.

“1. Writes in consequence of a promise he made the last time he saw her.

“Queen Elizabeth is well assured of the goodwill of the Queen of Navarre, and has more than once expressed her wish for the continuance of the same. She also congratulates the Queen of Navarre on her affection for the true religion, which she feels assured she will advance at all times. . . . Elizabeth has desired him to remind her of these things.”

France was for several years torn by religious dissensions; there were the Bourbons, and the great Protestant party backed up by the Queen of England, then the Guises and the Catholics, who had the support of Spain, and a third party, headed by Catherine de Medicis, which was between the two extremes, equally opposed to the reformed religion and the ambition of the Guises. While Jeanne d’Albret stood boldly up for the Calvinists, the King of Navarre

rendered himself suspicious to all parties by his wavering conduct. One day he was to be found in a monastery observing Easter, and a few weeks afterwards listening to the sermons of a minister of the Reformed religion. Calvin, in a letter to Coligny, complained bitterly of his Majesty's inconsistency, and in a letter to the king himself he remonstrated with the king, not only on his defection from the good cause, but on his private life. In fact there was now almost a complete separation between Antoine de Bourbon and his wife. Jeanne d'Albret was forsaken for some of the sirens of the Court of Catherine de Medicis.

"Chantonay," says Baron de Ruble, "endeavoured to enliven the gravity of Philip II., by giving him a description of the doings of the King of Navarre." On the 19th June, 1561, he wrote to his Spanish Majesty—"It appears that Vendôme cares little for the absence of his wife, because when they are together she wears the breeches, and he is no longer at liberty to entertain ladies and to pass the night at table as he does at present; a course of conduct which often makes him ill . . . "And on the 15th August, Chantonay revealed the feelings of Jeanne d'Albret for her truant and profligate husband. He wrote—"How his wife detests him I know, for she makes no secret of it . . . " We then find Chantonay giving a description of the enthusiasm with which Jeanne d'Albret was hailed in various towns through which she passed during a

journey to Paris. "At Orleans," says that devout Catholic, "she was received by all the heretics, who waited for her as if she had been the Messiah."¹ And Throckmorton, writing to Challoner on the 20th December, 1561, says that—"Twenty-five religious ladies, the beautifullest of sixty, ont jette leur frocquez aux orties,² and scaled the high walls of the Monastery of St. Magdalen, near Orleans; so much do they abhor the superstitions of the cloister, or rather delight in the company of profane persons."

After "the Queen of the Reformers" had made her entry into Paris, where she was received by the Court with all the etiquette observed towards foreign sovereigns, and by her husband, she went to St. Germain. On the 4th September, 1561, Chantonay wrote again to Philip II. concerning the Queen of Navarre, saying—"She arrives determined to do all the damage she can to religion, and even to rate her husband because he goes to mass. I am convinced that the queen (Catherine de Medicis) will have much difficulty in living with her."

We see by Desormeaux, whose information is derived from Davila, La Poplinière, Castlenau, the memoirs of Condé, and a number of other authors, the various forces set in motion in order to win over the King of Navarre to the Catholic party; his Majesty's favourites, the Papal legate, the Spanish ambassador, the ladies of the Court, and the King's

¹ Vide *State Papers*.

² "Throw your frock to the nettles," is to commit a rash act.

chamberlain, François d'Escars, all intrigued together to attain this end. The latter pointed out to his master that Charles IX. and his two brothers were subject to dangerous illnesses, and would probably die in the flower of their youth as François II. had died; that then the crown would belong to him, but that France would not willingly obey a heretic monarch. Seeing what happened afterwards in the reign of Henri IV., it must be admitted that the reasoning of François d'Escars was sound. On the other hand, the Papal legate and the Spanish ambassador promised Antoine the island of Sardinia, from whence he might direct attacks on the kingdoms of Tunis, Algeria, and Tripoli. The historian of the House of Bourbon adds—"Guise and the legate, who were always alarmed lest he should escape them, dared to propose that he should repudiate Jeanne d'Albret in order to marry Mary Stuart. The Papal legate pointed out to him that this marriage would not only bring the throne of Scotland as a dowry, but would give him claims upon England. The Pope, in fact, was ready to dissolve his marriage with Jeanne d'Albret, and to declare the deposition of Elizabeth. According to Desormeaux and some authorities, Antoine de Bourbon could not make up his mind to separate himself from a wife who had borne him two children, and his paternal affection outweighed his ambition. Other authorities say that the objections came from the other side, and that Mary Stuart declined to give her hand to the divorced

husband of Jeanne d'Albret. The King of Navarre may also have been actuated by other and less worthy motives. At the period in question he had taken for mistress one of the ladies of honour of Catherine de Medicis, the beautiful Rouet de la Bérandière, who influenced all his decisions, and bound him to the Court.

In consequence of the desertion of Antoine de Bourbon, the Prince de Condé, his brother, took the leadership of the Protestant party, while Jeanne d'Albret, who could not be persuaded to hear mass, returned broken-hearted to Navarre. The state of affairs which then reigned in France is vividly described in the pages of Davila, the memoirs of Condé, the letters of Pasquier, &c., &c. Here was Antoine de Bourbon at the head of his army pursuing his Huguenot brother, and threatening his wife and children. In another part of France the Comte de Sommerive gave battle to his father, the Comte de Zeude. Everywhere the torch of religious discord was kindled, among high and low. It is related that at Bar-sur-Seine the procurator of the king, one Rabet by name, tried his own son, accused of being a heretic, and had him hung before his own eyes. Fighting went on everywhere—in town and country, in the churches, and in private houses. Montaigne regretted that he did not live among savages (!). "They," he said, "fell, and devour their victims; but is it not more barbarous to eat a man living than to eat him dead, to tear to pieces and to torture a body full of feeling, to roast it by degrees, to have it bitten

and lacerated by dogs and by pigs, as we have not only read but recently seen, not amongst old enemies, but old neighbours—and what worst is, under the pretext of piety and religion?" And Antoine de Bourbon was one of the triumvirs who encouraged these atrocities. Not for long, for in the civil war which ensued he soon fell, hated by the Protestants whom he had betrayed, and unwept by the Catholics, in whose cause he lost his life.

Antoine de Bourbon was mortally wounded at the siege of Rouen. In the fever which set in before he died, he appears to have had pleasant visions of the island of Sardinia, of which he spoke with rapture; and it was not until he was about to breathe his last that he recognized that he had been deceived by the King of Spain and the Papal legate. While under the impression that he would recover, he indulged in his usual tastes, and had the youngest and prettiest women of the Court to dance before him; his mistress, Mademoiselle de la Bérandière, never quitted his bedside. However, when aware that his end was near, he turned his thoughts to more serious matters, and wrote to Jeanne d'Albret to implore her forgiveness, to warn her to keep a sharp look-out upon Lower Navarre and Bearn, coveted by Philip II., and to recommend their children to her care. In the matter of religion, the expiring monarch seems not to have known which way to turn. Two doctors attended him—the one a Catholic, Vincent Lauro, skilful, modest, and attached to his religion; as ~~Desormeaux~~

says, "he afterwards became Bishop of Mondovi, Cardinal, and very nearly Pope. The other doctor, named Mézière, was a man of infinite jest, an agreeable companion, and with a fund of good stories at his disposal. Each doctor tried to influence the religious opinions of the dying prince. Vincent Lauro at first had the better of it; he persuaded the King of Navarre to confess and to receive the viaticum. Upon this came Catherine de Medicis, who, finding the sick man in great suffering, recommended him the Book of Job, which the Huguenot doctor read aloud to him with much effect, and then proceeded to reproach him for his continual variations in the matter of religion. The king promised that if God spared his life he would adopt the Confession of Augsburg. However, two days later, lamenting the troubled condition of the country, he declared that he would use all his influence in favour of Calvin. . . ."

Further on we find, when the hand of death was on the king, that "Mézière read the Holy Scriptures to him, and consoled him in these terrible moments. Shortly afterwards came a Jacobin in disguise, whom the Cardinal de Bourbon had sent for, and he on his side began to exhort the dying man. . . . Then he expired, leaving those who surrounded him uncertain as to his faith; he died, then, as he had lived, without knowing what to believe. He risked everything in favour of the Huguenots, and never obtained their confidence; he died in the service of the Catholics, and none of them regretted him."

So died Antoine de Bourbon, at the early age of forty-four, leaving behind him a widow and two children—Henry IV. and Catherine de Bourbon.

We here append a few despatches, culled from the *State Papers*, bearing upon the subjects referred to in the foregoing pages.

THROCKMORTON TO THE QUEEN.

“August 25th, 1559.

“Spake to the King of Navarre three leagues from Paris, on the 22nd, about eleven o'clock at night, and delivered her letters, &c. For answer he praised her (Queen Elizabeth) for so great amity, and praised God for her preservation to advance true religion. . . . Perceives by the King of Navarre's discourses that he would have her marry no one of the House of Austria, nor the Earl of Arran; thinks he will make an offer to her for some of his own friends, for he desires she will be advised by him in her marriage. He said the whole family of Austria were great Papists; that her marriage was the making or marring of all.”

MUNDT TO CECIL.

“13th May, 1561.

“. . . The King of Navarre lately sent an envoy to the chief Protestant princes to excuse himself from a certain speech which was said to have been made by his order at Rome, by Peter Moreto, in the conclave of the cardinals, which had been much altered from what he desired. He said that he would omit nothing for the spread of true religion, and offered to do all he could to strengthen the friendship existing between France and Germany. . . .”

THROCKMORTON TO THE QUEEN.

“21st May, 1561.

“The Prince de Condé, the Admiral, the Duke of Longueville, the Marshal Montmorency, and his brother Damville were not at the coronation, because they would not assist at the Mass. . . . For the temporal peers there assisted at the coronation, the King of Navarre, the Constable, the Dukes of Guise, Nevers, &c., &c. . . .”

The coronation was that of Charles IX.

THROCKMORTON TO CECIL.

"13th July, 1561.

"Since the despatch of his letters of this date, he doubts the conclusion of this great assembly¹ in daily consultation, as he hears that the King of Navarre does not proceed in the cause of religion, as he made good show; seeming to think that by this means he may be in case to recover his kingdom of Navarre, or be adjudged by the Pope capable thereof. . . ."

Navarre had been lost by a Papal bull, might it not be restored by a similar instrument? and was not Navarre worth a mass? But what do we find next?

VISCOUNT DE GRUZ TO THE QUEEN.

"24th Sept., 1561.

"10. By a private understanding with the Pope, the Venetians, MM. de Savoy, Lorraine, and Guise, the Constable, M. de Nemours, all the French bishops and cardinals, the Sorbonne of Paris, which has chosen him (King of Navarre) as patron, and many others, both in Germany and Italy, the King of Spain designs to be made guardian of the king and his realm. They wish to excommunicate the King of Navarre and his wife, the Prince de Condé, and their adherents; to declare them heretics and rebels, and to deprive them of their right to the succession to the throne. They think that if the succession should fall to the House of Navarre, they would change religion and deprive the Pope of his authority. . . . The king has a bad constitution, and is not likely to live long. The Duke of Orleans has a bad cough. . . . The Duke of Anjou has been ill for more than a year, and is dying from day to day. The queen-mother, on account of certain predictions, makes much of the King of Navarre, and has promised her daughter to his son."

In fact, Nostradamus had foretold the end of the Valois line.

¹ Colloquy of Poissy.

GUIDO GIARRETTI TO THE QUEEN.

" Oct. 11th, 1561.

" The King of Navarre has solicited the Pope to intercede with the King of Spain for the restitution of that realm, the history of the occupation of which by Spain is here narrated. The Pope has promised to send an envoy to Philip on the subject. . . ."

And on the same date, under title of *Intelligences from Italy*, we find—

"The Pope is informed that the queen-mother, having taken the cardinals with her to Divine service, the pulpit was occupied by a Lutheran preacher, who spoke against the Holy Sacrament in such terms that the Cardinal Tournan left the church without making any reverence to the Queen. The Pope was much distressed therewith, and told the ambassador of the King of Navarre that his master was a traitor and a Lutheran, who should be punished. . . ."

THROCKMORTON TO THE QUEEN.

" 6th March, 1562.

" 2. Throckmorton asked what proof the queen could have that the queen-mother was speaking sincerely, seeing that she and the King of Navarre were bent to advance Papistry and overthrow the Protestant religion, not only in France, but in other countries; for confirmation of which he perceived that the Queen of Navarre, the Prince de Condé, the Admiral and all his house are forced to retire from the Court. . . ."

" 3. The Admiral said that the King of Navarre hoped to compound with the King of Spain for his kingdom of Navarre, but he assured him that the queen-mother was well inclined to advance the true religion, although she is forced to show a good face to the adversary. . . ."

And on the 21st March, 1562, under heading *Advices from Italy*, we read—"The King of Spain has told the King of Navarre that he would travail for his satisfaction if he would live a Catholic, and do

his best to bring the queen to do the like, and reduce the Court to the same. In the same despatch he exhorted the queen-mother and the King of Navarre to hasten the bishops forward to the Council (of Trent).

THROCKMORTON TO THE QUEEN.

"31st March, 1562.

" M. de Lansac has arrived in France from Rome. . . . It is thought that he brings the resolution of the recompense which the King of Spain will give the King of Navarre in satisfaction for Navarre. Suspects the matter will be drawn at such length that the King of Navarre will find himself in the end abused. . . ."

The recompense here referred to was no doubt the island of Sardinia, which Antoine de Bourbon considered a paradise, which he would willingly have accepted, but which he never obtained, as the astute Throckmorton clearly foresaw.

SMITH TO THE QUEEN.

"17th January, 1563.

"2. On the 14th there came a secretary with letters from the Cardinal of Lorraine. They work there¹ marvellously fast, and offer in marriage the Queen of Scotland to Fernando, the Emperor's son. She serves them for a good 'stale'; she has been offered to the King of Spain's son, the Kings of Navarre and Sweden, the emperor's son, and the Cardinal de Bourbon, who is no priest."

ADVICES FROM ITALY.

"Rome, 6th April, 1563.

" M. de Sevres, ambassador from the French king, has arrived. He asks that the Cardinal de Bourbon may be permitted to marry, and to govern France in the place of his brother, the late King of Navarre. It is thought that this will be granted. . . ."

¹ At Poissy.

THROCKMORTON TO THE QUEEN.

“5th Oct., 1563.

“ 17. The Bishop of Rome’s ambassador has departed to Rome. It is said that the King of Spain has so prevailed with the Bishop of Rome that the young Prince of Navarre is, by the Council of Trent, declared illegitimate, and the lands of the queen his mother given in prey to him that can conquer them.”

CHAPTER X.

HENRI IV.

IN the middle of the month of November, 1556, the King and Queen of Navarre, followed by the Prince of Beran, set out for Paris on a visit to the Court of Henri II. Great preparations were made by the French king for his reception. All along the road they were treated in a right royal manner, and on the 12th February, 1557, they made their entry into Paris. The interview between Henri II. and Antoine de Bourbon was extremely cordial, and his French Majesty is said to have been particularly struck with the good nature and vivacity of the little Prince of Bearn, who was then three years of age. Henri II. took him in his arms, and asked him if he would like to be his son. The child without displaying the least timidity replied, pointing to his father—*A quet es lou seigne pai*—or, “That is my lord father.” The king then proposed that he should be his son-in-law, and to this arrangement the little prince consented. Antoine de Bourbon communicated this anecdote to his sister,¹ and charged one Captain Beauvais to tell

¹ *Lettres d'Antoine de Bourbon et de Jehanne d'Albret*, p. 144.

her "of the favour which it pleased the king to show me in proposing the marriage of his daughter, Madame Marguerite, with my eldest son, a matter which I consider as such a peculiar mark of his good grace, that I feel completely at ease, and satisfied on the subject of my most cherished wishes in this world." The rumour of this marriage circulated at Court, and in the month of September, 1557, Antoine de Noailles passing by Amboise on his way to Guienne conveyed "some good words" on the part of the Princesse Marguerite to her future husband.

On this subject Brantôme quotes the following letter written by Jeanne d'Albret to one of her ladies-in-waiting who was ill—a letter in her own hand, which he saw—

"I write this, my great friend, to rejoice you, and cause you to recover your health. The king, my husband, has sent me good news, that having had the boldness to ask the king for Madame, his young daughter, for my son, he did him the honour to accord his request. I will not conceal the pleasure this affords me. . . ."

There is no date given to this letter, but a note says that it must have been written in 1557—when *Madame* was just double the age of her future husband.

Twenty years elapsed before this marriage was more seriously spoken of. Henri II. was dead, and so was his eldest son, François II., and the throne was occupied by Charles IX. The country was torn by civil and religious strife. Great battles were being continually fought between Catholics and Protestants,

towns were taken and retaken, and acts of atrocity daily committed, especially by the Catholic party. On one side were the king, Catherine de Medicis, his mother, the Pope, the Guises, and the Spaniards, while the Huguenots were headed by the Queen of Navarre, her son the Prince of Bearn, Condé and Coligny, and were backed up by Germany and England. Two very decisive victories over the Protestants—those of Jarnac and Montcontour—which led to no consequences as the Huguenots were soon again in the field, at length disgusted the Court with the war, and led to the conclusion of the peace of St. Germain, on the 8th August, 1570. According to Brantôme Marshal Tavannes declared that it would be difficult to get rid of the Huguenots by arms, and that the best thing to do would be to play the fox. The Protestants obtained, among other advantages, the possession of four cities of refuge, and thus was brought to a close the third Religious War.

On the 26th November, 1570, Charles IX. married Elizabeth, the second daughter of the Emperor Maximilian. Anne, the eldest daughter, had already espoused Philip II., and this alliance drew closer still the bonds which united the great Catholic Powers. But even in the eyes of Charles IX., his own marriage was not nearly so important as that which he proposed for his sister. By giving the hand of his sister Marguerite to the Prince of Bearn, he hoped to deprive the Protestants of their leader, and he naturally concluded that most of the principal Hugue-

nots would follow their chief. Marguerite, though only eighteen years of age, was known at Court to be the mistress of the Duc de Guise whom she wished to marry, and the consequence was that she resisted the projects of her brother. Charles IX., in order to remove this impediment, directed Henri d'Angoulême, Grand Prior of France, an illegitimate son of Henri II., to assassinate the duke. Guise managed to make his escape, and then to appease the wrath of his Majesty by marrying Catherine of Cleves.¹ The following despatches written by Sir Francis Walsingham show the interest which this matter excited in England—

WALSINGHAM TO LORD BURLEIGH.

“PARIS, 12th August, 1571.

“The marriage between the P. of Navarre and the L. Margaret is not yet thoroughly concluded, Religion being the onely let: the Gentlewoman being most desirous thereof, falleth to reading of the Bible, and to the use of the Prayers used by them of the Religion. . . .”

SAME TO THE SAME.

“BLOIS, 16th Sept., 1571.

“... The marriage between the Prince of Navarre [and the Lady Margaret] is not so forward as Queen Mother was in preparation at *Paris*, who had provided both Jewels and Wedding garments. The only impediment as I hear is Religion. There departeth towards the concluding of this matter towards the *Queen of Navarre*, who is now gone to *Arragon*, to certain Baynes there, for her health, *Byron* and *Beauvoys*.”

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

No date.

“Touching the Marriage in Treaty here betwixt the Prince of Navarre and the Lady Margaret, Sir Thomas Smith, Mr. Killegrew

and I, knowing how much the success of the same might further the cause of Religion; and finding the greatest difficulty to be the manner of the solemnizing of the same, we sent unto the Queen of Navarre a Copy of the Treaty of the marriage betwixt King Edward and the late Queen of Spain, the king's sister here, wherein it was agreed (as your Lordship knoweth) that she should be married according to the form of our Church. This Copy of the Treaty, as the Queen of Navarre her self told Sir Thomas Smith and me, standeth her in very good stead, whom she sent for the 7 of this month to come and speak with her. At our access she told us that she did not send for us, before she did make the Queen Mother acquainted therewith; not (saith she) in respect to myself, but in respect of her Majestie towards whom I would be loth to ingender any Jealousie, considering that she is growing to so good Amity with this Crown: For as for my self, I am not afraid to make known to all the world the great good will I bear towards her Magestie, to whom I am as much bound as ever one Prince was to another. And because (saith she) you are ministers to her Magestie here, I thought good to make you acquainted in what state and terms the Treaty of the marriage standeth betwixt their Magesties here and me (saith she) there is no difference, but onely the manner of solemnization. I have alledged the Treaty which you sent me, whereunto they take exceptions, such as are of no great value, and therefore (said she) I cannot tell what to Judge of the matter, because amongst the rest of the exceptions, they say it was no true Copy of the Treaty. I have sent for you Monsieur Smith (saith she) to know, because you were a dealer in the same, whether you will not Justifie it to be a true Copy, to whom Sir Tho: Smith that knowing the great good will her Magestie did bear her, and how much she desired the good success of that marriage, as a thing that tended to the advancement of Religion, and repose of this Realm, he could not but in duty avow the same, and be willing to do any good office that might advance the said marriage. She made us acquainted with other particularities which I thought good to refer rather to the report of this bearer than to commit them to writing.

“The Copy of the Letter which I send unto your Lordship here inclosed, sent unto her from her son, which she delivered unto us secretly to read, may show you how full of jealousie the matter is, and therefore until the same be concluded, I hold it for doubtful.”

SAME TO SAME.

"BLOIS, *March 29th*, 1572.

"... The matter of the marriage between the Prince of *Navar* and the Lady Margaret continueth doubtful, whereof Sir Thomas Smith and I have more cause so to judge, for that the 4th of this month it pleased the Queen of *Navar* to send for us to dinner. Immediately upon our coming she showed unto us how, with the consent of the Queen Mother, she had sent for us (as the Ministers and Ambassadors of a Christian Princess she had sundry causes to honor) to confer with us and certain others in whom she reposed great trust, touching certain difficulties that were impeachments to the marriage, which thing she could communicate to us after dinner. She said to us that now she had the Woolf by the ears, for that in concluding or not concluding the marriage, she saw danger every way, and that no matter did so trouble her as this, for that she could not tell how to resolve; amongst divers causes of fear she showed unto us that too chiefly troubled her.

"The first that the king would needs have her son and Lady Margaret, the marriage proceeding, to be courtiers, and yet would not yield to grant him any exercise of religion; the next way to make him become an Atheist, as also thereby no hope to grow of the conversion of the Lady Margaret, for that she would not resort to any sermon.

"The second that they would needs condition with the Lady Margaret, remaining constant in the Catholic religion, should have, whensoever she went into the country of Bearn, her Mass, a thing which in no wise she can consent to having her country cleansed from all Idolatry. Besides, said she, the Lady Margaret remaining a Catholic whensoever she shall come to remain in the country of Bearn, the Papists there will take her part, which will breed division in the country, and make her most unwilling to give ear to the Gospel, having a staff to lean to.

"After dinner ended she sent to us into the chamber, where we found a dozen others of certain Gent. of the Religion and their Ministers. She declared briefly what had passed between the king, queen mother, and her touching the marriage, as also what was the cause of the present stay of the same, wherein she desired us to severally say our opinion, and that sincerely as we would answer unto God. The stay stood upon three points—1st, Whether she might with a good conscience substitute a Papist for her son's

Proctor for the Fiansals, which was generally agreed she might. 2nd, Whether the Proctor going to Mass after the Fiansals, which was expressly forbidden by his latter procuratory, would not breed an offence to the godly. It was agreed that this would be no offence. 3rd, Whether she might consent that the word Fiansal might be pronounced by a Priest in his priestly attire with his Surplice and Stool. This latter point was long debated, and for the ministers concluded, that the same, though it were a thing indifferent, could not but breed a general offence to the godly; she protested that she would never consent to do that thing whereof there might grow any public scandal, for that she knew, she said, she would so incur God's high displeasure: upon which protestation it was generally concluded that in no case she might yield thereto, her own conscience gainsaying the same, so that now the marriage is held generally for broken. Notwithstanding, I am of a contrary opinion, and do think assuredly that hardly any cause will make them break, so many necessary causes there are why the same should proceed. By the next I shall be able to advertise your lordship of the certainty of this marriage. . . .

"The Admiral is to be shortly looked for here, and great hopes are conceived of compounding the discord between him and the house of Guise. For the conclusion of the *Navar* marriage there is eight chosen, to whom the matter is committed, four for the king and four for the Queen of Navarre. For the king is chosen, *Bivage*, Count *de Retz*, *Biron*, *Malalieur*. For the queen, Count *Ludowick*, *Francourt*, her chancellor, *de la Nove*, and her secretary. They are all as it is thought so well affected to the marriage, as there is no doubt made of some good conclusion, and so having nothing else to impart to your honor at present, I most humbly take my leave."

In her memoirs Marguerite de Valois gives another version of how matters passed. She relates how ambassadors were sent by the King of Portugal to demand her hand, and how the queen mother ordered her to receive them. Marguerite declared herself ready to do what her mother wished, but Catherine de Medicis, doubting this, lost her temper, and said she knew that I would sooner marry the nephew of the

Cardinal de Lorraine,¹ and, we may add, that the Cardinal boasted to the Portuguese ambassadors that this marriage would take place. Marguerite de Valois then relates all that she had to suffer on account of the Duc de Guise, and how she advised him at once to wed the Princesse Porcian, Catherine of Cleves. The King of Spain having caused the marriage with the King of Portugal to be abandoned, Marguerite says, "Some days afterwards my marriage with the Prince of Navarre, who is now our brave and magnanimous king, was spoken of. The queen, my mother, being at table, spoke for a long while on the subject with Charles de Montmorency. On leaving table he said that the queen wished him to speak to me on the subject. I replied that it was quite superfluous, as I had no will but hers; that in truth I wished her to bear in mind that I was a Catholic, and that it would displease me to marry a person not of my religion. The queen afterwards sent for me, and told me that the Montmorencies had proposed this marriage, and wished to know what I thought of it. I said that I had no will but hers, and I begged her to remember that I was a strict Catholic. After some time the Queen of Navarre, his mother, came to Court, where the marriage was decided upon before her death."

The peace of St. Germain, which had put an end to open hostilities, by no means quelled the animosity which reigned between Catholics and Protestants,

¹ The Duc de Guise.

both in Paris and through the country. In the capital the houses of several leading Huguenots were pillaged by the mob, and Charles IX. ordered the Provost of the Merchants, Marcel, who the following year took such a sanguinary part in the St. Bartholomew, to disperse the insurgents. This was done; two or three of the mob were killed by the watch, and the rest took to flight. This and some other acts of vigour for the protection of the Protestants inspired Henri of Navarre, the Prince de Condé, and most of their followers with confidence in the sincerity of the king. Coligny, however, doubted, and so did the Queen of Navarre. However, the king and queen, impatient to obtain their end, brought every possible influence to bear upon the Huguenot chiefs to induce them to come to Court; and Biron was despatched to propose to the Queen of Navarre, "to better establish and confirm their ancient relationship and the present peace, to give in marriage Margaret, the king's sister, to the Prince of Navarre."¹

It was thus that the Queen of Navarre had been induced to quit her city of refuge, La Rochelle, after having consulted her theological advisers, and to venture to Paris. Alas, Jeanne d'Albret, Queen of Navarre, was not destined to see her son's marriage. She died, probably of a natural death, but assassination was so common in those days that her rather sudden end was attributed to poison.

But this strong-minded woman had more than one

¹ *Davila*, t. v. p. 252.

reason for dreading the Court. On the 8th March, 1572, she wrote to her son at Bearn a long letter, in which she said—"I write to you privately; the bearer will tell you how the king emancipates himself. This is a pity. I would not for all the world that you should come here to remain. This is why I wish you to get married, and for you and your wife to withdraw from the corruption of the Court, for although I believed it to be great, I find it still worse than I thought. The men do not solicit the women, but the women the men. If you were here you would escape only by the grace of God." And the Queen of Navarre concluded her letter by saying that she had had a conversation with Madame Marguerite, and had hopes that she would change her religion, and, in fact, she declared that she would not have pushed matters so far but for this conviction.

"To speak then of the beauty of this rare princess, I believe that the beauty of all other who are, who are to come, and who have been, are ugly compared to her, and are not beauties." And it would be difficult to surpass the terms in which Brantôme speaks of the perfections of this princess, whose eyes were made to set the world in a blaze, and whose loveliness so astonished the Polish ambassadors, who came to the French Court to offer the crown to the Duc d'Anjou, that they were petrified.

Brantôme tells us that when the marriage was agreed upon, Catherine de Medicis on going to bed asked what her daughter thought of it, and that a

very foolish woman, who had not been long at the court, replied—"Why should she not rejoice over such a marriage, when it is possible that she may become Queen of France should the crown descend to the king, her affianced husband?" Catherine de Medicis called the lady a great fool, and declared that she would sooner die a hundred deaths than see such a silly prophecy accomplished. Another lady remarked—"But should this misfortune happen, you would be glad to see your daughter Queen of France?" Catherine again declared that she would sooner die a hundred times than see this happen, as great troubles would overwhelm France—"for I believe people would not absolutely obey the King of Navarre as they do my children for many reasons, which I do not mention." And Catherine went on to blame the abolition of the Salic law, as her daughter would be more capable to reign than many kings she knew.

Some little time was spent in negotiating this serious affair, when one day the Queen of Navarre, speaking to the king of France concerning the Papal dispensation necessary for the marriage of her son, said that the Pope might, on account of his religion, keep him waiting. "No, no," replied the king; "I honour you, my aunt, more than the Pope, and love my sister more than I fear him. If *M. le Pape* shows too much obstinacy I will myself take Margot by the hand and lead her to be married in the Protestant church. I am not a Huguenot, but neither am I a fool.¹

¹ *L'Etoile*, t. i. p. 73.

According to L'Etoile, Charles IX. at this moment never left the Queen of Navarre, called her his great aunt, his all, his best-beloved, and treated her with so much honour and reverence that every one was astonished. Then on retiring for the night he whispered to his mother, Catherine de Medicis—"Well, madame, what think you, have I not played my part well?" "Yes; but you must continue." "Allow me to manage matters," replied the king, "and you will see them all taken in a net."

A few days after the above conversation the Queen of Navarre was taken ill, and on the 9th June, 1572, she expired, at the age of forty-four years. D'Aubigny and several other authorities incline to the belief that she was poisoned by a Florentine perfumer called René, at the instigation of Catherine de Medicis. De Thou has his doubts on the subject, while in some quarters the death of the queen was attributed to a pulmonary disease aggravated by the excitement consequent on the approaching nuptials of her son.

The king is said to have expressed the most acute grief at the death of his aunt, and to have ordered a post-mortem examination to see if she had been poisoned. The body was opened, and, as Pierre Mathieu says in his *History of France*, the lungs were found much ulcerated, "but there were persons who said that the disease was in the brain," and it was remarked that the surgeons who conducted the post-mortem did not examine the brain. L'Etoile tells us that "René was one of the executioners of

the St. Bartholomew—a man impregnated with all sorts of crime and wickedness, who stabbed the Huguenots in the prisons, and lived on murders, thefts, and poisonings, having poisoned among others, just before the St. Bartholomew, the Queen of Navarre, and the day after the massacre a poor jeweller. . . . Therefore was the end of this man and his whole house terrible, a real mirror of the justice of God; for he died shortly afterwards on a dung-hill, consumed by vermin; two of his sons were broken on the wheel, and his wife died in a house of ill-fame.”

The marriage articles had been signed by the Queen of Navarre on behalf of her son on the 11th April, and Charles IX. had settled his sister's dowry, but the Papal dispensation tarried to arrive. When it did at last come it was not such as had been demanded; however, both parties agreed to go on with the marriage, and the Cardinal de Bourbon, the uncle of the heretical husband, consented to perform the ceremony. It was afterwards argued, when an attempt was made to set up a claim to the throne on the part of the cardinal, called by his adherents Charles X., that in the marriage contract passed between the King of Navarre and Marguerite de Valois, having acted as guardian, he had acknowledged his nephew as the head of the House of Bourbon. We shall have something more to say of this prelate later on.

It had been at first decided that during the preparations for the nuptials of the Prince of Navarre

and the sister of the king, a wooden citadel should be built on an island in the Seine, opposite the Louvre, that the command of this citadel should be given to the Duke of Anjou, and a picked body of men, to undergo a siege; that the Prince of Navarre, Coligny, and other nobles, should attempt to capture this fort, and that both sides should fire blank cartridge; but when their blood was up, on a certain signal the garrison should load with ball cartridge, and that the murders thus accomplished should be attributed to a sudden quarrel between the parties. The fort was built, but the Huguenot were too suspicious to fall into the trap, and his Majesty had the construction removed before this suspicion could take deep root.

It was at first hoped that the Cardinal of Lorraine, who was then at Rome, would obtain the dispensation from the Pope, as regards both relationship and difference of religion; but the brief was addressed to the Cardinal de Bourbon because he was to perform the ceremony, and as he was not satisfied with it, he asked for something more precise. Upon this the king threw all the blame of the delay upon him. Making fun of the cardinal, he declared that the objections he raised were naught but superstition and ill-grounded scruples, that he did his Marguerite harm, and that she was much displeased that a matter she looked forward to with such pleasure should be so long delayed.

The Prince of Navarre, who assumed the title of

King of Navarre on the death of his mother, arrived some months later at Court, accompanied by eight hundred gentlemen all in mourning. They were received, says Marguerite de Valois in her *Memoirs*, by the king and the whole Court with great honour, and the nuptials took place a few days later with great "triumph and magnificence"; the King of Navarre and his followers having changed their mourning for very rich and handsome costumes. All the Court too were splendidly attired, "and I was dressed in royal fashion, with crown and corsage of spotted hermine, which is worn in front of the body, all brilliant with crown jewels, and a large blue mantle with a train four *aunes* long borne up by three princesses."

One remarkable fact about this marriage was noted by Davila,¹ who says that many persons remarked that when the Cardinal de Bourbon asked Marguerite de Valois if she would take the King of Navarre for her husband, she made no reply, whereupon the king, her brother, laid his hand upon her and forced her to bow her head. By this movement she was considered to have given her consent; but she before and afterwards, on every occasion she could speak with freedom, declared that she neither consented to renounce the Duc de Guise, to whom she had previously pledged her troth, nor to take for husband the bitterest enemy of that duke.

It had been foretold that should the marriage of

¹ Tome v. p. 263.

the King of Navarre and Marguerite de Valois take place the liveries would be of crimson, and in fact these nuptials, so closely followed by the massacre of the St. Bartholomew, received the nickname of *les noces vermeilles*. If the new Queen of Navarre showed little affection for her husband, the King of Navarre, on the contrary, testified the greatest affection not only for his wife but for his mother-in-law, Catherine de Medicis, and for his brother-in-law, Charles IX. And it was on this account that in the councils of the Court it was resolved that the princes of blood-royal should be spared during the approaching massacre.¹

The question was debated if the King of Navarre and the Prince de Condé should be excepted. With respect to the King of Navarre there was no difference of opinion—the royal dignity, it was urged, and the alliance he had just contracted with the king, commanded this. Besides, the decision at which they had just arrived, already odious in itself, would be infinitely more so if they massacred a great king, the near relation of his Majesty, and who had just married his sister, in the palace and in the sight of the king his brother-in-law, and, so to speak, in the arms of the queen his wife. It would be impossible to justify such an action.

According to De Thou, Coligny and his friends were convinced that the king really wished for peace, that he regarded it as necessary for the State, and

¹ *Sismondi*, t. xix. p. 151.

that in order to secure it he wished his sister to marry Henri of Navarre, and to carry war into Flanders. But, adds De Thou, the Italian authors have rendered this point problematic by praising the cunning and admirable talent of this great king, who had long premeditated the blow he was about to strike. De Thou goes on to relate how the Queen of Navarre on her way to the Court met Cardinal Alexandrini, who passed by without saluting her. He went straight to Blois, where he was at once admitted to a secret interview, and protested against the league with the Turk and against the king's sister marrying Henri of Navarre instead of the King of Portugal. Charles IX. assured the prelate that the marriage would be most advantageous for the settlement of religious affairs, and that in the end the Pope would be quite satisfied with him.

We have little to say here respecting the horrors of the St. Bartholomew, one of the most terrible crimes which has ever reddened the history of any country. Brantôme tells us that it was owing to the intercession of Marguerite de Valois that the king was induced to spare the life of her husband. But this is more than doubtful. Marguerite makes no mention of this episode in her *Memoirs*. What she does tell us is, that on the evening of the massacre her own life was exposed by her mother in order that her husband might suspect nothing. "My mother," she says, "told me to go to bed. As I made my bow my sister took me by the arm and stopped me, and beginning to cry, said—'My

God ! my sister, do not go,' which greatly alarmed me. The queen my mother perceived this, and calling my sister, was very angry with her, and forbade her to say anything. My sister said that it was useless to send me to be sacrificed like that. The queen replied that if it pleased God no harm would befall me, but that I must go, for fear something should be suspected. . . . She told me very roughly to go to bed. My sister burst into tears, said good night, without daring to add anything else, and I went away petrified and bewildered, being unable to imagine what I had to fear."

Nothing happened to the King or Queen of Navarre on that terrible night. At break of day Charles IX. sent for Henri de Navarre and the Prince de Condé, and accused them and the Huguenots of being a source of continual trouble in the State. They both protested, and their lives were spared. A few days afterwards Charles IX. was with difficulty prevented by his wife, Elizabeth of Austria, from slaying Condé with his own hand ; he, however, contented himself with entering his room and crying, " Mass, Death, or Bastille." The King of Navarre and his sister Catherine, the Prince de Condé and his wife and others abjured. The King of Navarre, in fact, to show the sincerity of his conversion, issued an edict prohibiting the exercise of the reformed religion in Bearn, and restoring the property of the Catholic Church. He also expressed extreme grief that he had imbibed false doctrines in his childhood. Both

the King of Navarre and the Prince de Condé wrote letters to the Pope announcing their conversion, and asking for the Papal benediction. On the 1st November, 1572, his Holiness sent a favourable reply. How could it have been otherwise, seeing the intense delight which the news of the massacre in Paris had caused at Rome. What it behoves us to remark in these two letters is, that the Pope confirmed the marriages contracted before the arrival of his dispensation—the marriage of Henri de Navarre with Marguerite de Valois, and of the Prince de Condé with Mary of Cleves.

The marriage of the King of Navarre and the massacre by which it was followed by no means appeased the troubles which disturbed the state. A large number of Catholics, disgusted with the atrocities which had been committed in Paris and a number of other places, joined the Huguenots, and in a short time the fourth civil war was raging through the country.

The King of Navarre, then twenty years old, was detained a prisoner at Court, where he amused himself in company with Charles IX., aged twenty-three, and Henri, King of Poland (his brother, who afterwards reigned as Henri III. of France), aged twenty-two. The youngest brother of Charles IX., the Duc d'Alençon, was not allowed to share in the orgies of the three young monarchs, being suspected by Charles of wishing to dethrone him. But if the conduct of the King of Navarre was reprehensible at this period, so was that of his wife, who not only

kept up her intrigue with the Duke of Guise, but had other lovers. The King of Navarre fell an easy victim to the wiles of Madame de Sauve, a woman of the most wanton character, who served in the celebrated flying squadron of Catherine de Medicis. Mezaray tells us that this beautiful woman employed her attractions as well on her own account as in the interests of the queen-mother, "trifling with and exercising an absolute empire over all those persons who were dying in love with her (*les mourants*), never losing one, but often acquiring more." Catherine de Medicis employed her at this moment to sow dissension not only between Henri de Navarre and his wife, with the view of bringing about a divorce, but between Henri and the Duc d'Alençon, who was also a State prisoner. Madame de Sauve seems to have had no objection to becoming the mistress of both princes, and if we are to believe Bassompierre, of Charles IX. as well. Nothing but the flight of the two princes from Court prevented them from cutting each other's throats over this dangerous syren. Marguerite de Valois in her *Memoirs* complains bitterly of these abominable designs, which were the source and origin of so many troubles, and would have us believe that at this period she was deeply attached both to the Duc d'Alençon, her brother, and to her husband. She was no doubt terribly vexed at the influence exercised by that Circe, as she called Madame de Sauve, over both princes. In a letter which the King of Navarre wrote to the Governor of Bearn, he said—"This

Court is the most strange I ever saw ; we are always ready to cut each other's throats ; we carry daggers, and very often a breastplate beneath the cloak. The king is as much menaced as I am ; he likes me more and more . . . I brave every one. The League, as you know, wishes my death, and for the third time has forbidden my mistress (Madame de Sauve) to speak to me. It keeps such a close watch upon her that she does not dare to look at me. . . .”

One of the lovers attributed to Marguerite de Valois was La Mole. La Mole and Cocconas—the first a Provençal, the second a Piedmontais—were in the service of the Duc d'Alençon, and were afterwards engaged in a plot having for effect to unite the Politicians and the Huguenots together, and to wage war against the Court. At the last moment La Mole and Cocconas revealed the conspiracy, but this did not prevent them from being put to the torture and executed. La Mole was not alone a favourite of the Duc d'Alençon, but was “well treated” by the Queen of Navarre ; while Cocconas on his side was “well treated” by the Duchesse de Nevers. When the conspirators were beheaded, the queen and the duchesse openly displayed their grief by themselves taking the heads of the victims to the chapel of St. Martin, near Montmartre, and burying them with their own hands. The violent death of these favourites was a piece of retributive justice, as during the St. Bartholomew they had behaved with marked atrocity.

La Mole was not an unfavourable specimen of the courtier of that day; he devoted most of his time to gallantry, but he never neglected going to mass, not only once, as L'Etoile tells us, but three or four or even five or six times a day, even when he was campaigning, which was rare with the profession; and he was heard to say that had he missed once his opinion was that he would be damned. He was persuaded that mass devoutly listened to expiated all sins and adulteries he might commit; the late king being told of this, said that one might keep a register of the debauches of La Mole by counting the times he went to mass. His last words on the scaffold were, "God have mercy on my soul and the Blessed Virgin. Remember me to the good graces of the Queen of Navarre and the ladies."

The Duc d'Alençon was the first to make his escape from the Court and the charms of Madame de Sauve, who favoured his rival, Henri de Navarre. He fled in September, 1575, and did not draw rein until he reached Dreux, where he found a number of gentlemen waiting for him. Although he had taken no steps to prevent the execution of La Mole, he showed his adherents the *pourpoint* which he had worn on the day that he was beheaded, and declared that he would continue to wear it "as a pledge of great vengeance."

On the 20th February, 1576, the Court was thrown into consternation on learning that the King of Navarre had managed to make good his escape.

There were already three armies hostile to the Court in the field—one commanded by Condé occupied Burgundy, that of D'Alençon was in Poitou, and that of Damville, a son of the Constable Montmorency, in Languedoc. The flight of the King of Navarre was therefore a great blow for Henri III. and Catherine de Medicis; the first had surrounded him with guards, the second with maids of honour, who appear to have betrayed the trust of their mistress, to have revealed to their lover the intrigues of the Court, and to have aided him in his escape. In fact, in addition to Madame de Sauve, the King of Navarre, who took little notice of the immorality of his wife, was carrying on intrigues with Madame Dayelle and with Madame de Carnavalet.

Marguerite de Valois tells us how, on the departure of her brother, she wept so abundantly that she caught a feverish cold which confined her to bed, and that while she was ill the king her husband never came near her, "being either busy concerning his own escape, or wishing to devote the short time which remained to the voluptuousness of enjoying the presence of his mistress, Madame de Sauve." And, in fact, the King of Navarre fled without even saying adieu to his wife, and yet it is stated that he no sooner found himself at a safe distance from the Court than he said, "There are only two things which I regret—mass and my wife, and I shall be able to get on without the former." The King and Queen of Navarre were hardly separated before they seemed

anxious to resume those matrimonial bonds which sat so lightly on both of them.

Suspected for a time of having favoured the escape of her husband, Marguerite de Valois fell into such disgrace at Court that no one but the brave Crillon ventured to visit her, and in fact she was placed under arrest. When the King of Navarre "had arrived in his government," says Marguerite in her *Memoirs*, "his friends remonstrated with him for not having said adieu to me, representing that I had the power of serving him, that he must regain me, and that he could derive great utility from my friendship. It was easy to persuade him of this, as being removed from his Circe, Madame de Sauve, her charms had lost their force by absence." She adds how the King of Navarre wrote her a very kind letter, begging her to forget what had passed between them, to believe that he wished to love her, and show this more than he had ever done.

When the queen-mother took her away from the Court to go and find her husband in Gascony, all the courtiers regretted her departure as if a great calamity had fallen on their heads. Some said, "The Court is widowed of its beauty;" others, "The Court is dark—it has lost its sun;" others, "The Court is obscure, and there are no torches." And, according to Brantôme, several courtiers wished to slay M. de Duras.

The escape of the King of Navarre, and the formidable proportions now assumed by the allied forces,

Huguenots and moderate Catholics, who were marching on the capital 30,000 strong, brought the Court to its senses. Negotiations were opened under the auspices of Catherine de Medicis, who acted at this critical juncture with her usual skill and good fortune. What was called the peace of Chastenoy or the peace of *Monsieur*,¹ was concluded on the 6th May, 1576, and the king held a bed of justice on the 14th to have it registered by the Parliament of Paris. This peace, if it suited the purposes of Catherine de Medicis, whose great object was to detach *Monsieur* from the coalition, was considered so humiliating by the Parisians, that they would not permit a *Te Deum* to be sung in its honour.

The Huguenots demanded and obtained very considerable concessions, while the King of Navarre made several personal claims, and among these—that he should be allowed to go to Bearn with his wife, in order to settle the affairs of that State; . . . that he should receive the 200,000 francs constituting the dowry of his wife, with interest, &c.² And thus ended what was called the fifth pacification.

After waiting for three months the King of Navarre once more embraced the Protestant religion, declaring that he had never abjured in his heart the faith in which he had been brought up by his

¹ The Duc d'Alençon, being now the next heir to the throne, was styled *Monsieur*, in accordance with the usual custom. After the peace of Chastenoy he took the title of Duc d'Anjou.

² *De Thou*, t. vii. pp. 414, 415.

mother. He demanded Henri III. to send him back his wife and sister Catherine, and he despatched Duras to the Court to fetch them. The French king refused to part with his sister, for reasons thus given by Marguerite de Valois herself—"He said that it was owing to the friendship which he bore me, and because I was an ornament to the Court, that he wished to detain me as long as possible. He delayed openly refusing me leave to go until he had everything ready for declaring war, as he meant to do, against the Huguenots, and consequently against the king, my husband. And in order to find a pretext, he caused the report to be circulated that the Catholics complained of the advantageous terms conceded to the Huguenots." Marguerite de Valois then relates how her brother dismissed the messenger sent by her husband—"with harsh words, full of menace, saying that he had given his sister to a Catholic and not to a Huguenot, and that if the king my husband wished for me, he must become Catholic."

And consequently Duras returned to the King of Navarre with Catherine de Bourbon only.

In August, 1576, it was announced that Catherine de Medicis was about to repair to Nerac with her daughter, the Queen Marguerite, in order to restore her to her husband, and to have a conference with him; but this voyage did not take place, and possibly was not intended. In vain did Marguerite protest that she had not married for her

own pleasure, but in obedience to King Charles, to the queen-mother, and to himself, and that she ought to be allowed to share the fortunes of her husband. Henri III. refused to listen to her, and declared it to be his determination to exterminate the Huguenots, and Marguerite on her side threatened to make her escape.

In spite of the protestations of affection for her husband to be found in the *Memoirs* of Marguerite de Valois, this did not hinder her from trying to ruin the party to which he was attached. Her affection for her brother *Monsieur* was extravagant, and Catherine de Medicis employed her to bring him back to the Court, and this task she accomplished through the agency of her former lover, Bussy d'Amboise, who was then one of the favourites of *Monsieur*.¹

According to Marguerite de Valois, the queen at this moment hated her husband beyond everything. She, however, wishing to join him, feigned to be ill, and obtained permission to go to Spa to drink the waters, her idea being to make her escape from that place. She started on her journey, as she tells us, in a litter, the pillars of which were covered with scarlet velvet of Spain embroidered with gold, and looped up with knots of silk. This litter had glasses, and the windows and linings were covered devices—forty different devices in Spanish and Italian—concerning the sun and its effects. “My litter was

¹ *Sismondi*, t. xix. p. 380.

followed by that of Madame de la Roche-sur-Yon and that of Madame de Tournon, my lady of honour, and ten maids of honour on horseback with their governess, and six carriages or chariots."

Marguerite de Valois did not effect her purpose, and after a short stay at Spa returned to the Court. Towards the end of the year 1577, the peace of Bergerac was signed between the rival parties, but it was not until December, 1578, that Marguerite was allowed to leave the Court, that is to say, not until several months after the King of Navarre had sent Miaussans to Paris to demand the restitution of his wife. This is one version. The Vicomte de Turenne on his side declares that the King of Navarre would not consent to receive his wife until certain evil reports respecting her conduct at Court had been cleared up—that the king her brother did not love her, but considered it humiliating for him that his sister should be repudiated by the King of Navarre; also that her return would have an evil effect on the King of Navarre, and would provoke corruption.¹

To believe Marguerite de Valois herself, she never ceased imploring the king to allow her to rejoin her husband, and he, seeing that he could no longer refuse, determined that they should separate good friends. He paid her a visit every morning, assured her that not only should her dowry be paid, but that he would give her money from the privy purse. He impressed upon her that his friendship would be of

¹ *Sismondi*, t. xix. p. 504.

the greatest utility to her, and that of *Monsieur* baneful—*Monsieur*, who just made his escape once more from Court, thanks to the aid of Marguerite.

After reading the above it is pleasant to read in the *Journal d'Henri III.*, October, 1578, how his Majesty called upon the clergy to furnish him with money to pay for the expense of sending his sister back to her husband, and how the clergy murmured and were discontented, turned a deaf ear, refusing flatly to aid the king, who they said "had shown sufficiently by his misconduct that he bore little affection for the Church."

At last, on the 2nd August, 1578, Marguerite de Valois set out for Gascony to rejoin her husband. She was accompanied by the queen-mother, the Cardinal de Bourbon, the Duc de Montpensier, &c.; and Catherine de Medicis, one of whose objects it was to corrupt the Court of the King of Navarre, was of course accompanied by her flying squadron. After spending a few days with Henri III. at Olinville, the two queens, with their numerous retinue, proceeded on their journey. In spite of what Marguerite de Valois proclaims in her *Memoirs*, it is very doubtful whether she really wished to return to her husband. That she bore him any affection is out of the question, considering their mutual infidelities, and the fact that in the "flying squadron" were two ladies who had openly shared the favour of the King of Navarre—Victoire Dayelle and Madame de Sauve.

In his *Journal d'Henri III.*, L'Etoile chronicled

the fact of Marguerite having left Paris to return to her husband the king—*à son grand regret et corps défendant, selon la bruit tout commun*; but these words, says the éditor, were afterwards effaced.

It was not at all so certain at first that the King of Navarre would receive Catherine de Medicis, but on learning how she was escorted, he wrote, "Tell her that she can come, and that if her daughter behaves well the past will be forgiven."

The first meeting between the King of Navarre and the two queens took place at La Reolle, to which place his Majesty repaired with five hundred gentlemen on horseback, "some of the religion of Gascony, others Catholics." According to Marguerite, matters passed off very quietly. Nevertheless, Marguerite, when the meeting was over, remained with her mother, while the king and his escort returned to Nerac, there being a good many points to settle before a thorough reconciliation could be effected. In fact, we find that it was not until the beginning of 1579 that Marguerite and her mother made their appearance at Nerac, accompanied by a brilliant court, which soon succeeded, as the Protestant pastors had feared, in banishing all that austerity they had been so industriously inculcating. Festivities succeeded each other rapidly; the Queen of Navarre encouraged the gallantries of her husband, became the *confidente* of his illicit love, received his mistresses with favour, and asked him to accord a similar indulgence to her lovers. And in the midst of this

unbridled license one finds the Cardinal de Bourbon trying to induce his nephew to embrace the Catholic religion once more, and the nephew saying—"My uncle, it is said that some persons wish to make you king; tell them to make you Pope." And Catherine de Medicis too, who had little confidence in the sincerity of her son-in-law's Protestantism, seconded the efforts of the cardinal.

The fact is, that the end of the Valois line was foreseen. Francis II. and Charles IX. had died without issue; Henri III. had no children, and was not likely to have any, and it was the same with *Monsieur*, who was rapidly waning away. In the eyes of the ultra-Catholic party, it would be better to look upon the Cardinal de Bourbon, at this epoch fifty-five years of age, as then heir to the throne than upon a heretic king.

The Court, or rather Courts, had not been long at Nerac before Marguerite de Valois had reason to complain; she was hampered in the exercise of her religious duties, and to render her position more disagreeable, "since Dayelle had gone away the king my husband has begun to run after Rebours," a creature full of malice, who did her all the harm she could. "Under these circumstances," says Marguerite, who always writes like a saint, "putting my trust in God, He took pity on my tears, and allowed us to leave that little Geneva of Pau, where, fortunately for me, Rebours remained ill; and the king my husband, losing sight of her, lost all his affection

too, and began to flirt with Fosseuse, who was very pretty, quite a child, and very virtuous."

During their journey the King of Navarre fell ill, and Marguerite tells us how she nursed him for seventeen days and nights without undressing; and in this task she was aided by the Comte de Turenne, afterwards Duc de Bouillon. Her peace of mind, relative as it was, was soon disturbed once more. Troubles broke out in Guienne between the Catholics and the King of Navarre, and who should appear on the scene as a peacemaker but the Duc d'Alençon, who soon managed to conclude a peace which was afterwards ratified by Henri III. The duke, unfortunately for all parties, fell in love with Fosseuse. Knowing that the King of Navarre would suspect her of furthering the suit of the duke, her brother, Marguerite relates how she implored him to take his departure, and Fosseuse, seeing his Majesty, whom she loved, exceeding jealous, consented to become his mistress. What followed appears almost incredible. Fosseuse, when about to become a mother, gained complete ascendancy over the king, who not only neglected his wife, but wished to oblige her to accompany him and his mistress to Aigues Chaudes. Marguerite resisted, and in the end her husband and Fosseuse set out for the baths accompanied by Villesavin and Rebours! Marguerite shortly afterwards learned that the king had promised to marry Fosseuse if she were confined of a son; however, she "had confidence in the goodness of God, and that of my husband," which did not

prevent her from bewailing "the four or five happy years I spent with my husband in Gascony, while Fosseuse governed there with honour."

When the Court returned to Nerac in 1581, we find Marguerite so far humiliating herself as to try and induce Fosseuse to go to a quiet country house to be confined. Marguerite promised to behave to her like a mother, and pointed out that by this arrangement the honour of both might be saved—that of the mistress and that of the injured queen. Fosseuse refused the offer of Marguerite in an arrogant manner, evidently doubting her sincerity; and not long afterwards, "one morning at daybreak she was taken with pains, and sent for my doctor, and asked him to warn the king, which he did. We occupied the same room, but different beds." His Majesty after some hesitation, not wishing the confinement of Fosseuse to be known, and yet wishing her to receive proper care, at last drew aside the curtain of his wife's bed, and asked her to go to the assistance of Fosseuse. "'She is very ill,' he said; 'and I am sure that, seeing her in this state, you will forget what has passed. You know how much I love her; I beg you will oblige me in this.' I replied that I had too much honour for him to be offended at anything that he did, that I would take care of her as if she were my daughter. . . ."

And thus was Fosseuse delivered, not of a son as she fondly hoped, but of a still-born daughter.

Marguerite carefully avoids mentioning how M. de Turenne fell in love with her, how she did not turn a

deaf ear to his advances, and how this fact was communicated to Henri III., who hastened to inform the King of Navarre that his wife was unfaithful, and that Turenne was the favoured lover. Henri III. was delighted to be able to indulge in this little piece of perfidy, even at the expense of his own sister. Philippe Strozzi was the bearer of this precious document, for, being in love with Turenne's sister, he was starting for Nerac in order to demand her hand. He believed that the letter which he carried was a recommendation in his favour on the part of the king. The King of Navarre showed this denunciation to the two accused parties, who denied the charge. So great was the anger aroused in the minds of Marguerite and her friends by this bit of treachery on the part of Henri III., that De Thou and other historians declare it to have been one of the principal causes of the War of the Lovers, which immediately followed. In this war we may mention that Henri IV. captured Cahors, which had been promised to him as part of his wife's dowry.

Marguerite de Valois then relates how the king, her brother, and Catherine de Medicis, her mother, pressed her to pay them a visit, and how she had great difficulty in getting her husband to consent to this trip, and to allow her to take Fosseuse with her. She knew, she said, that once out of sight, her fickle spouse would soon forget his mistress.

At this point the *Memoirs* of Marguerite de Valois come to a close, but we have a good many letters

which she wrote to her husband during their separation. She left Nerac in the beginning of 1582, and in March she wrote a long epistle to the King of Navarre, in which she complained of the dissimulation which reigned at Court, and the difficulty of finding out the real intentions of her brother. In this letter she alluded to the "little trips" which Henri III. made to his castle of Olinville, where he used to have masses celebrated in the hope of continuing the Valois line. In the way of gossip Marguerite related how La Vernée and Satanaie had lost their lovers; the first loving only his wife, and the second Madame de Sauve. The two ladies above-mentioned were maids of honour to Catherine de Medicis; no doubt recruits in the flying squadron. Marguerite concluded her letter by expressing her regret that her husband was ill, and sending him a prescription in Latin, which he was not to let any one see, and was to burn.

A few days afterwards Marguerite wrote another letter, in which she said—"My brother (*Monsieur*) has sent Laqueville to England to declare for certain that he will go there in a short time to marry the queen, in consequence of which I have let off fireworks." Now all idea of this marriage, never seriously entertained by Elizabeth, had been given up more than a year before.

Marguerite remained for eighteen months at the French Court, and during that time her conduct appears to have been most reprehensible. Brantôme speaks of the transports which her amiability and her

beauty excited, and she seems, in the midst of the enthusiasm she had created, to have given full rein to her evil passions. Her conduct at last was such as to draw down upon her the reproaches of the king. In the presence of the whole Court he overwhelmed her with a thousand insults, named all the lovers she had favoured since her marriage, and those actually in favour, and ended by ordering her to quit Paris.

According to L'Etoile, on the 8th of August, 1583, the Queen of Navarre, by order of Henri III. several times reiterated, left Paris to return to her husband, where his Majesty told her that she might live more honestly. She first went to Palaiseau, whither the king had her followed by sixty archers of the Guard, under the command of Larchant, who arrested Madame de Duras and Mademoiselle de Bethune, her friends, also her secretary, her doctor, and other members of her household. Not only did the Captain of the Guards tear the mask which Marguerite de Valois wore from her face, and search her litter, but he several times struck Madame de Duras and Mademoiselle de Bethune, who were accused of unnatural crimes. These prisoners, ten in all, were conveyed to Montargis, where they were examined by the king himself, as to the ill conduct of his sister and the supposed birth of a child, of which the young Chavallon was said to be the father. His Majesty having failed to elicit anything, set the prisoners free, allowed his sister to continue her journey, and wrote an

account of what had happened to the King of Navarre. After the first letter he wrote others, asking the King of Navarre to take back his wife, as he had discovered that what he had written was false.

The King of Navarre, who cared little for the misconduct of Marguerite, was fully convinced that the first version was the true one, but as he could not pass over the insults offered to his wife, he sent Duplessis Mornay on a mission to Henri III., who addressed his Majesty in these terms:—"If the queen, your sister, his wife, deserved this affront, the King of Navarre demands that full justice be done; if not, Sire, he is assured that, even in the interest of your house, you will punish the authors of this scandal." Henri III. at first endeavoured to palliate and disguise the insult, but Duplessis Mornay declared that an insult offered at midday on the high road, and which was known to every one, could not be disguised, and that his Majesty had done too much if his sister was not guilty, and too little if she was guilty. The king, however, refused to send any categorical reply until he had been able to consult his mother and his brother, and while this affair was pending, Henri de Navarre refused to receive Marguerite, who had been thus bespattered with mud by her brother. After waiting for some months for the promised answer, the King of Navarre had the mortification to receive a letter, in which Henri III., after asking him to restore his wife to favour, went on to say—"Kings are liable to be deceived, and the

most virtuous princesses are not always exempt from calumny. You know what was said about the late queen, your mother, and how ill she was spoken of." In presence of all his courtiers Henri de Navarre exclaimed—"The king does me much honour; in his first letter he called me a cuckold, and now tells me that I am the son of a harlot."

The reply of Henri III. had been conveyed to the Court of Nerac by M. de Bellièvre, who was backed up by Marshal Matignon, at the head of a considerable force in the vicinity. The King of Navarre, understanding that he was to be intimidated into taking back his wife, resented this pressure, and took possession of Mont-de-Marsan. In January, 1584, he sent M. de Clervant to Henri III. to represent to him that he could not, yielding to force, consent to receive his wife back, for it would be honourable neither to her nor to himself to do through fear what should depend upon friendship and reason. But in case his Majesty would withdraw his troops from certain positions, then he would consent to take his wife back.

The question of appearances having been settled, Marguerite once more returned to her lord; but not long afterwards, as L'Etoile has duly chronicled, there arrived a gentleman on the part of the King of Navarre, complaining that a person called Ferraud, who had been recommended to him by his wife as a secretary, had tried to poison him, by the advice and orders of his mistress. Marguerite in fact was highly

discontented with her husband, who ever since she had been insulted by her brother, had refused to treat her as his wife. She also found herself the object of universal contempt on the part of the whole Court. A few months later, having probably been able to obtain no satisfaction, Marguerite de Valois declared herself in favour of the Holy League, left her husband, and threw herself into Agen, raising the standard of revolt against both Henri III. and her husband. At Agen, which was in her appanage, she was received by the Catholic population with open arms. It was supposed that she had fled from her husband, owing to his religion, and because he had just been excommunicated by Sextus V. Soon obliged to fly from Agen, where she had made herself unpopular, after hurrying from one place to another she was captured by one of the king's generals, the Marquis de Canillac, and imprisoned in the castle of Usson, where she soon managed to captivate her gaoler.

On the 10th of June, 1584, *Monsieur* died. A few days before this event took place Henri III., aware that his brother had only a few days to live, wrote a pressing appeal to Henri de Navarre to repair to Court and hear mass, as he would soon be heir to the throne. It was even said, observes L'Etoile, that the bearer of the royal letter took with him 200,000 crowns, to arrange some great marriage for his Majesty; but this was a simple rumour.

That *Monsieur* should have died young is not

astonishing. His life had been one long scene of debauchery. A few months before his end came he had made up one of his frequent quarrels with the king his brother, and this worthy pair, it being Carnival, disguised now as priests, now as lawyers, &c. &c., galloped through the streets, knocking down some persons and beating others, and carrying on their pranks all night, and until ten o'clock the next day. There was a report that on returning to Château Thierry, the king made *Monsieur* a present of 100,000 crowns, which did him more good than the *collations* of Paris and of Madame de Sauve. When dying, the duke is said to have remarked that he had been ill ever since he went to see his brother in Paris, which observation, L'Etoile tells us, made people talk !

However *Monsieur* may have come by his end, his death had a serious effect on the position of Henri de Navarre, and it was on this account that his faithful and virtuous servant Duplessis Mornay and two colleagues addressed him in the following terms—
“Pardon us another word, Sire ; these love affairs, to which you devote so much attention, appear no longer in season. It is time, Sire, that you should give your love to Christendom, and particularly to France. . . .”

At this period Henri III., after remaining for some time neutral between the League and the Reform, signed a treaty with the Catholic party at Nemours on the 7th July, and hence arose a fresh civil war

known as the War of the Three Henriès—between Henri III. who represented the moderate party, Henri de Guise who represented the extreme Catholics and the League, and Henri de Navarre, who, together with Henri de Condé and Henri de Turenne, represented the Huguenots.

It was during this period that the King of Navarre made the conquest of the Comtesse Diana de Guiche, the widow of Philibert de Gramont, who had fallen in the service of his Majesty. The countess, who went by the name of *La belle Corisande*, appears to have held a sort of court of love at her castle of Louvigny. The inflammable Henri de Navarre had no sooner seen this lady than he became violently enamoured of her, and aware of the scandalous life which his wife was leading in Auvergne, proposed to marry her. He is said even to have signed a promise to this effect with his blood, and to have consulted his advisers as to the expediency of divorcing Marguerite de Valois and marrying his new love. *La belle Corisande* had given Henri de Navarre very solid proofs of her affection for himself and his cause; she had pawned her broad lands and sold her jewels to enable him to pay his army. Henri at this moment, remarks Capfigue, despaired of ever becoming King of France, and seriously thought of founding a new kingdom composed of Aquitaine and Gascony. Now the house of Gramont-Guiche was descended in direct line from the Dukes of Gascony, and what could he do better than marry *La belle Corisande*, and share with her his new

throne? The King of Navarre consulted d'Aubigné on the subject, saying that several princes had married subjects. D'Aubigné took a very different view of the situation. He replied—"The princes to whom you refer, sire, reigned over their estates in tranquillity, while you are fighting for yours. The Duc d'Alençon is dead, and you have only one more step to mount in order to reach the throne. But if you marry your mistress you will block the road for ever. You owe to the French great virtues and good actions. . . ."

Whether it was owing to this advice, because *La belle Corisande* soon lost her beauty and became fat and red in the face, or because the fickle monarch fell in love with the Marquise de Guercheville, the proposed marriage was not carried out.

Whatever may have been the intentions of the wily King of Navarre, it is certain that he treated the Comtesse de Guiche more with the respect of a wife than the freedom of a mistress. His letters attest this. It has been found strange that he should in his letters to *La belle Corisande* have entered into military details. But had she not furnished her lover with the sinews of war, and, according to Sully, raised at her own expense 20,000 Gascons who changed the fortune of a campaign?

Several of these letters of the king to his mistress have been published. Voltaire has published several after his *History of Henri IV.* S^{te} Beuve, in his *Causeries de Lundi*,¹ has dwelt at some length on

¹ T. xi.

Henri IV. écrivain. None of the king's letters to Corisande are dated, but the first seems to have been written in 1555, after the conclusion of the treaty of Nemours. Henri is in the field watching the enemy; as soon as he can make out what his intentions are he will fly to Corisande on the wings of love.

Concerning one long epistle addressed by the king to Corisande, that eminent critic S^{te} Beuve remarks—"This in my opinion is the pearl of love-letters written by Henri IV. Gabrielle herself, with that *galante* letter dated from before her portrait, obtained nothing so perfect and so charming. What a fresh and smiling landscape, enlivened with gleams of light! . . ." In fact it was tender, it was pastoral, it was French, it was natural, and all that S^{te} Beuve could desire. Withal it was respectful, and hardly the effusion one would have expected from the pen of a rough young warrior.

We have referred to certain suspicions which the sudden death of *Monsieur* gave rise to. In one of his letters to Corisande we find Henri de Navarre writing about the death of his friend the Prince de Condé as follows—"One of the greatest misfortunes I had to fear has happened, which is the sudden death of M. le Prince. I am sorry for him, such as he should have been to me; not such as he was to me. At present I am the mark at which all the perfidies of the mass are aimed. They poisoned him, the traitors. Will God remain master, and shall I have the favour of being His executioner? This poor prince after having tilted at

the ring on Thursday, supped and felt quite well ; at midnight he was taken with violent vomiting which lasted until morning ; all Friday he remained in bed ; in the evening he supped, and having slept well got up on Saturday morning, had his dinner, and played at chess ; he then walked about his room talking with his friends ; suddenly he said, ‘ Give me a chair, I feel faint.’ He was hardly seated before he became speechless, and he drew his last breath sitting down. The traces of poison were quickly visible. The astonishment which his death has created in this country exceeds belief. . . . I foresee a great deal of trouble ; pray God boldly for me ; if I escape, He it is who will have protected me to the tomb, to which I am closer perhaps than you expect. I remain your faithful slave. Good-night, my soul. I kiss your hands a million of times.”

Brillaud, the controller of the Prince de Condé’s household, was put to the torture, and declared that he was guilty, but that he had acted at the instigation of the Princesse de Condé. The princess would have been executed had she not been *enceinte*. As it was she remained for six years in prison, when the Parliament of Paris recognized her innocence, and restored her to liberty. It is difficult to see why the princess should have been suspected, for she was a Protestant. In another letter written shortly after the one above-quoted, the King of Navarre said—“ I have discovered a man told off to assassinate me.” In a note Voltaire tells us that this was a Lorrainer sent

by the priests of the League, and that this was the fifth attempt on the life of the good king.

In another letter, supposed to have been written in April, 1589, when his Majesty was at Blois with Henri III., he thus addressed Corisande—"My soul, I write to you from Blois, where five months ago I was condemned as a heretic, and unworthy to succeed to the crown of which I am to-day the principal pillar. See the works of God towards them who put their trust in Him. . . . My health is good, thank God, and I swear with truth that I neither love nor honour anything in the world like you. I will remain faithful to you to the tomb. . . . I hope to be able to send shortly for my sister; make up your mind to come with her. The king has spoken to me about the lady of Auvergne. I think that I shall make her skip. Good day, my heart; I kiss you a million times. This 18th May; he who is bound to you by the most indissoluble tie."

We shall have to refer to two more letters to Corisande further on in connection with the King of Navarre's sister, Catherine de Bourbon. Suffice it to say that at this moment Corisande was terribly jealous, and continued to load the King of Navarre with reproaches in spite of all his protestations of fidelity. It was not until March, 1591, that the rupture came, and that Henri IV. wrote his quondam mistress a letter which brought their *liaison* to a close. In a fit of jealousy she had presumed to revenge herself by meddling with the family affairs of his Majesty.

We must return for a while to 1586. The war of the "Three Henri's" was desolating the country. Henri III., who always preferred his brother-in-law of Navarre to the Duc de Guise, kept up negotiations with him in spite of the threats of the League and the wrath of the Parisians. In April he sent the Cardinal de Lenoncourt to Nerac with a message of peace, and then the Duc de Nevers. There were two obstacles in the way of a complete reconciliation. Unless the King of Navarre would consent to change his religion he could not recognize him as his successor. Then there was the quarrel between Marguerite and her husband. As regards the latter, Henri III. admitted that the scandalous life which his sister had led in Auvergne, since she ran away from her husband, rendered a reconciliation with the King of Navarre out of the question. He therefore proposed to take advantage of the irregularity of the papal dispensation to declare the marriage of Henri de Navarre and Marguerite null, and to give him for wife his niece Christine, a daughter of his deceased sister the Duchesse de Lorraine. Catherine de Medicis undertook to play the part of negotiator in chief, and after a conference between the Duc de Nevers and the King of Navarre she met his Majesty at the castle of Saint Bris near Cognac.

Three interviews took place, but although Catherine de Medicis was accompanied as usual by her "flying squadron," she failed to effect her purpose. Desormeaux says that Catherine "did not forget her

brilliant squadron of beauties, all themselves anxious to show themselves to a prince so renowned for his gallantry, his wit, and his personal appearance ; however, she counted less upon the charms and enticements of her *maids of honour* than upon the simple grace and budding beauty of the Princesse Christine de Lorraine, her granddaughter, whose rare qualities were in perfect harmony with the external gifts which she had received from nature ; she proposed to offer her to him for wife, as more worthy than the despicable Marguerite to be the companion of a hero.”¹ However, the King of Navarre had been too often deceived by the Court, and both he and Condé refused to listen to the charmer, charmed she never so wisely. The King of Navarre, in fact, is said, when the maids of honour were presented—“Madame, there is nothing here that I want.” Catherine de Medicis remained for some months at Cognac, and there was plenty of dancing and feasting, but in the end the queen-mother had to return to Paris without having persuaded the King of Navarre once more to embrace the Catholic religion, or to marry the Princesse Christine of Lorraine.

Negotiations having broken down the war was resumed, and the Duc de Joyeuse marched against the Huguenot army. On taking leave of Henri III. he promised to bring him back the head of the King of Navarre and that of the Prince de Condé. The King of Navarre had thrown himself into La

¹ *Histoire de la Maison de Bourbon*, t. v. p. 437.

Rochelle, where the following incident took place. His Majesty fell in love with the daughter of a magistrate of that city, and seduced her. The scandal was public, and greatly afflicted the austere Huguenots, and the ministers of the gospel remonstrated in strong terms, exhorting Henri de Bourbon to turn from the wickedness of his ways, to repent, and to make an *amende honorable*. The King of Navarre acknowledged his sin, but would not consent to humiliate himself in public. However, Duplessis Mornay represented to him in private that the Duc de Joyeuse was approaching, and that on the eve of battle he could not refuse to fall at the feet of the Supreme Being, the sole arbitrator of victory. What reproaches would he not address to himself should his impenitence draw down upon his troops the malediction of the Almighty. The King of Navarre upon this consented humbly to confess his fault in the church of Pons, in presence of the chiefs of his army. The minister Chaudieu preached, and consented to pardon his Majesty on condition of his renewing his public penitence at La Rochelle, where the fault had been committed. Much to the irritation of the young nobles who surrounded him, Henri de Bourbon submitted to this second humiliation. A few days afterwards was fought the battle of Contras, orders having been given by the Duc de Joyeuse to grant no quarter, and to slay any one wishing to spare a Huguenot, even the King of Navarre. After singing the 118th Psalm, translated

by Clément Marot, the Protestant army moved forward to the attack, and after a sanguinary conflict the Catholics were totally routed, and instead of the heads of the King of Navarre and the Prince de Condé being sent as trophies to Paris, the dead bodies of Joyeuse and his brother were despatched to Henri III., together with a noble and conciliatory letter on the part of his brother-in-law.

Immediately after the battle the King of Navarre hastened to Bearn to lay the standard he had captured at the feet of the *Belle Corisande*. For this he has been severely blamed in the *Economies Royales* of Sully and by D'Aubigné, who says in his *Memoirs*—"Thus he threw all his promises to the winds and his victory to love." It appears, however, that the great majority of the nobles in the Huguenot force were in favour of breaking up the army for a while on the ground that it needed repose, that the troops were exhausted with long marches, and were overburdened with plunder. And, according to Desormeaux, the king was unwilling to oppose the wishes of nobles who served him at their own expense.

Contras had not long been fought and won, when a sad misfortune plunged the whole Huguenot party into grief and consternation—the Prince de Condé was poisoned. His wife accused Brillaud, Controller of the Household, of this crime; he was put to the torture, and in his agony in his turn, while confessing his guilt, declared that he had been instigated to

commit the crime by the Princesse de Condé. The princess was arrested by order of the King of Navarre and tried. The king evidently entertained serious suspicions of the guilt of her, for in a letter to Corisande of the 13th March he said, "Remember what I told you before; I am seldom wrong in my judgment—a bad woman is a dangerous animal. All these poisoners are Papists. My soul, I am well enough in body, but much afflicted in spirit. Love me, and show me your love; that will be some consolation. As for me, I shall never fail in the fidelity I have sworn to you; in truth of which I kiss your hands a million times." The judges ordered her to be put to the question, but as she was about to become a mother, it was decided that she should not be tortured until forty days after her confinement. Fortunately, before that date arrived the judges repented of their precipitation, and the King of Navarre ordered the proceedings to be discontinued. In spite of this, the princess was detained in prison for six years, when the Parliament of Paris rehabilitated her, and declared her to be innocent. Desormeaux is at a loss to know how the judges could have paid any attention to the accusation brought against the princess by Brillaud when half out of his mind with pain. Charlotte de Tremouille was a Protestant; she had married Condé against the wishes of her family. It was a marriage of affection; there was nothing to show that husband and wife were on bad terms. The Princesse de Condé had

a fair chance, her husband alive, of sharing with him the throne of France. Henri III. was impotent; the King of Navarre had no children, was separated from his wife, and was constantly in danger. The King of Navarre dead, the Prince de Condé was heir to the throne. Then it is by no means certain that the Prince de Condé was poisoned. The Duc d'Aumale, in his *Histoire des Princes de Condé*, says that the prince had been ill for some time before his decease, and that the doctors were not unanimous with regard to the cause of death.

In 1588 two important events happened—the Guises were assassinated, and Catherine de Medicis died, carrying to her grave, says Desormeaux, the suspicions of the League, the hatred of the Huguenots, and the contempt of her son, whom she had ill served and often betrayed. Catherine appears to have strongly recommended her son, when dying, to put his trust in the King of Navarre. As for Marguerite, who had been obliged to sell her jewels to the Venetians, and to send her plate to the melting-pot, she disinherited her at the instigation of Henri III., depriving her of the country of Auvergne.

What the King of Navarre thought of his mother-in-law we may gather from a letter which he wrote to Corisande at this period. He said—"I expect every hour to hear that orders have been sent to strangle the Queen of Navarre; that, and the death of her mother, would make me sing the song of Simeon."

After the death of Catherine de Medicis a reconcili-



HENRI IV. BEFORE PARIS.

ation took place between Henri III. and the King of Navarre, and both monarchs attacked the League, laying siege to Paris. During these operations the King of Navarre found time to fall in love first with Charlotte des Essarts,¹ then with the noble Marquise de Guercheville, Madame de Rocheguion, and next with the Abbess de Montmartre. The first appears to have offered no resistance to the advances of his Majesty, but it was a different affair with the Marquise de Guercheville, whose scruples the King of Navarre could not overcome; she told him that, owing to her position, she could not be his wife, but that that position could not permit of her being his mistress. And we are told that Henri IV. afterwards rewarded this exemplary lady by appointing her a lady of honour to Marie de Medicis, remarking to the Abbess de Montmartre—“*because she has really been a lady of honour.*” So says Mongery. The *Lettres Missives d'Henri IV.* contain one letter which his Majesty wrote to this virtuous lady—a letter to which L'Etoile thus refers. Friday, the last day of August, 1590, the king wrote with his own hand to Madame de la Rocheguion the letter which follows—

“My mistress, I write to you on the eve of a battle. The issue is in the hands of God, who has already ordered what shall happen, and what He knows to be expedient for the glory and safety of my people. If I lose it you will never see me, for I am not a man to fly or retreat. I can assure you that, should I die, my penultimate thought will be for you, and my last shall be for God, to whom I

¹ Charlotte des Essarts, who had six children by the King of Navarre, was created Comtesse de Romantin.

recommend you and myself also. This last of August, 1590, from the hand which kisses yours, and which is your servant
(sic).¹ "HENRY."

As it happened, the battle did not come off, for on the approach of Henri IV. and the Duke of Parma, the *Hespagnols*, as L'Etoile calls them, retreated, and finally recrossed the frontier.

As for the Abbess de Montmartre, Mademoiselle de Beauvilliers, who was assailed by the King of Navarre in prose and verse, the chroniclers differ. Some represent her as being as virtuous as the Marquise de Guercheville, others with forgetting her vows, and lending a too willing ear to her royal suitor. This, however, is a matter of no great importance in the history of the King of Navarre, as only three of his mistresses exercised any serious influence on his career.

The fugitive attachments of the King of Navarre did not prevent him from continuing his correspondence with Corisande, whom he constantly assured of his unalterable fidelity; he wrote to her from the trenches at Arques, after the death of Henry III.,

¹ With regard to this letter, Henri Martin observes that the woman to whom Henri IV. addressed this noble language was worthy of listening to it, and was all the more worthy of the monarch's love because she did not yield to him. Henri had offered her a promise of marriage signed with his blood. . . . What characterized Henri IV. is, that while he was professing this chivalrous passion for the handsome widow of La Roche-guion, he had for mistress at the same time the Abbess of Montmartre and of Poissy, who did not scruple to accept his heretic homage, and help him to support the *ennuis* of the siege of Paris.

and when he had become King of France, and this correspondence did not cease until 1591, or nearly two years after the monarch had fallen in love with La Belle Gabrielle. It was brought to a close because Corisande, who had lost all her personal charms, and had become coarse and corpulent, vexed at the conduct of her lover, determined to revenge herself. For this purpose, contrary to the wishes of the king, she did what she could to favour the marriage of his Majesty's sister, Catherine de Bourbon, with the Comte de Soisson. She even persuaded them to get married secretly, in the absence of the king, who was campaigning, in company with Gabrielle d'Estrées. Henri IV., greatly irritated at this interference in his domestic policy, seized the opportunity to break off all further relations with Corisande. In March, 1591, he wrote to her—"Madame, I charged Lareine to speak to you on the subject of what, to my great regret, passed between my sister and myself. It appears that you have done nothing but blame me, and 'foment' my sister to do what she should not do. I should not have thought this of you, to whom I will only say this word—that I will never pardon any one who tries to come between my sister and myself."

According to Sully, the Comtesse de Guiche was irritated not only because the king, having loved her, loved others, but because, when she had lost her attractions, he was ashamed of ever having loved her.

It was in 1590 that the amorous Henri IV. made the acquaintance of *La Belle Gabrielle*, or Gabrielle d'Estrées, a lady whose virtue was not irreproachable, but whose faults have in all probability been greatly exaggerated by the chroniclers of the period. When Henri IV. met her she was the mistress of Bellegarde, one of the king's most distinguished captains. She appears, indeed, to have been passionately in love with him, and to have retained her affection for him even after she became the mistress of Henri IV., who bitterly complained of her infidelity in a letter which we shall presently quote.

A great many stories are told about Bellegarde and Gabrielle. One that Henri IV., who was aware that Bellegarde was in Gabrielle's room, sent Praslin, the captain of the guard, to kill him. Praslin, who had no idea of committing an assassination, made such a noise, and took so long executing the order, or the first part of it, that the lover had ample time to escape, and the captain had the satisfaction of informing his Majesty that there were no grounds for his suspicions. Declozeaux tells the following curious story in *La Revue Historique*—"The present proprietor of the castle of Cœuvres told us that he had recently removed an inscription, placed on one of the exterior doors of the pavilion of Gabrielle, which gave credence to the anecdote of Henri IV. suddenly arriving while Gabrielle was supping *tête-à-tête* with Bellegarde, who hid himself under the bed. The king took his place at table, and during the repast



HENRY IV. AND LA BELLE GABRIELLE.

handed the unfortunate lover the wing of a partridge, saying, 'After all, every one must live.' Forty years before the birth of Henri IV. this same story was told of François I.

In the *Lettres Missives d'Henri IV.*, the first letter we find addressed to Gabrielle d'Estrées is dated 4th February, 1593, and to this is appended a note which informs us that she was the daughter of Antoine d'Estrées, Marquis de Cœuvres, that she saw Henri IV. for the first time in November, 1590, and that the year afterwards she married Nicolas d'Amerval, Lord of Liencourt—a marriage of pure form, which was never consummated, and which was annulled in 1594 on the ground of impotency on the part of the husband, who had eleven children by his first marriage. At Court the lady never went by the name of her husband, but was called Madame Gabrielle until 1595; when she was created Marquise de Monceaux, before becoming Duchesse de Beaufort.

The fact is, that after the *liaison* with Gabrielle had been going on for some time, Henri IV., deeming it more convenient to have to deal with a complacent husband than with a father, persuaded the above-named Nicolas d'Amerval to marry Gabrielle. No doubt the husband had his reward; as for the father, L'Etoile tells us how, "in August, 1591, the king took the town of Noyon, in order, it was said, to give the governorship to Antoine d'Estrées, who, in fact, shortly after the capture of that place, was

named governor. A great many lives were lost on both sides.”¹

At the commencement of his *liaison* with Gabrielle d’Estrées, Henri IV. could have had little time to devote to his mistress. The Guises were dead and gone, so was Catherine de Medicis. Henri III. had been assassinated, and not long afterwards the Cardinal de Bourbon, who had been hailed as Charles X. by the League, was removed from the scene. Still the civil war continued to rage; nor did it burn less fiercely when the king consented once more to become a Roman Catholic, and was received into the *giron* of the Church of Rome, first at St. Denis, and then at Chartres. Giving ear to the angry protests of the League and the Spaniards, the Pope for a long time withheld his absolution.

During this troubled period we find Henri IV. seriously contemplating a divorce, and forming another matrimonial alliance. The hand of Elizabeth, we know, had been successively sought by Charles IX., Henri III., and the Duc d’Alençon, and in 1589 Henri IV., “the most cunning diplomatist of his time, knowing her weakness, and wishing to obtain a subsidy, pretended to be inspired with a tender feeling towards her Majesty, then fifty-seven years of age.” M. de Beauvoir, the French ambassador, who had received instructions, and who spoke to her Majesty on this delicate subject, relates that

¹ The town was recaptured by the Duc de Mayenne in 1593, with a loss of 3000 men, and the duke made his son governor.

on leaving the audience chamber the queen took him into her bed-room and showed him a fine portrait of the king, with gestures so expressive and so lively a demonstration, that it seemed to him that she would better like the original; and writing to Henri IV., he added—"She was not too angry, Sire, when I told her that you loved her."¹

The Comte de la Ferrière, in relating the above, appears to have mixed up two different proposals addressed by Henri IV. to Elizabeth—the first in 1589, when M. de Beauvoir was sent to England, a fortnight after the assassination of Henri III., the second in 1598, after the peace of Vervins. With regard to the first proposal, we find the following despatch in *Les Lettres d'Henri IV.*—

"À MONSR. LE GRAND TRESORIER DE LA REYNE D'ANGLETERRE,
MADAME ET BONNE SŒUR.

"M. de Beauvoir, a member of my Council of State, and captain of fifty men-at-arms of my artillery, whom I send to the queen my good sister, will tell you the commission I have confided to him; which tends to a good continuation of the friendship and sincere intelligence between us. I feel assured from the prudence and goodwill which you have shown me in the past, that you will gladly do what you can to further the same, as I beg you, and to believe that I am so much inclined to do all she may judge necessary for the common welfare of our affairs, that I shall have no other will than hers, as the said Sire de Beauvoir will tell you more particularly on my part, &c.

"Written from Fresne-Lesguillon, this 19th August, 1589."

On the same day his Majesty addressed a very similar letter to Walsingham, taking care not to

¹ *Projets de Mariage de la Reine Elizabeth*, by the Comte de la Ferrière, p. 4.

mention the precise nature of the instructions given to his ambassador.

In 1594 the wily Bearnais made another appeal to the heart and vanity of the maiden queen, writing to her as follows—

TO THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

“Madame, I do not know whether I should excuse myself and ask pardon for a sin committed against your will—that of having detained a handsome portrait, said to have been intended for my sister, or thank you for a peculiar favour destined for me in your heart. If I have committed a fault, you are the principal cause, for the representation of such great beauty is too strong a temptation for one who loves and reveres the original. . .”

Henri IV. had declared war with Spain, and required aid from Elizabeth, which she was little inclined to grant. “To subdue her obstinacy,” says a note in Lingard,¹ “Henri made a singular appeal to her vanity. Unton, the ambassador (probably the farce was concerted between them), wrote to her that the king had one day asked him how he liked his mistress, La Belle Gabrielle. ‘I answered,’ says Unton, ‘sparingly in her praise, and told him that, if without offence I might speak it, I had a picture of a far more excellent mistress, and yet did her picture come far short of her perfection of beauty.’ Unton, who showed it to the king, then wrote—‘He beheld it with passion and admiration, protesting that he had never seen the like. He kissed it, took it from me, vowing that he would not forego it for any treasure, and that to possess the favour of the lively picture he would

¹ Tome viii. p. 327.

forsake all the world.' Unton added 'that the dumb picture did draw on more speech and affection from him than all my best arguments and eloquence.'"

In fact, we find in *The Life of Egerton* (p. 415) a letter signed Douglas Sheffielde, in which he tells M. de Beauvoir, the French ambassador, that the vice-chamberlain has been commanded by her Majesty to send him her portrait, to be forwarded to Madame la Princesse, the sister of the king. But, he adds, "you will give greater pleasure by retaining it and sending it to the king, informing her Majesty that you had not the power to allow so handsome a portrait to escape the hands of your master, which will be so agreeable to him; or otherwise as it may please you to write to the vice-chamberlain; but above all keep the portrait, and send it to the king. . . Excuse me, if you please, my hardiness, and bad writing, which is unlearned since I came to England. (*Excuses-moi cy vous plait, ma hardies, et movez escritur qui est desaprins, depuis que je suis en Engleterre.*") There is no date to this letter.

The other proposal to which we refer was made under the following circumstances. Henri IV. had been forced, much against his will, to conclude the treaty of Vervins, which Hume acknowledges was extorted from him by necessity. Spain would not deal with the Netherlands as a free state, and Elizabeth would not desert the Dutch. It was under these circumstances that the French king, in his distress, made peace. He was no longer in a con-

dition to go on with a civil and a foreign war. We are told that he was most anxious to give Elizabeth satisfaction, and to atone and apologize for his breach of treaty, and that he even sent Harlay to England to sound her Majesty as to the possibility of a marriage which would unite the two crowns. The ambassador was to entreat Elizabeth to listen to the proposals of his master. After hearing what Harlay had to say, Elizabeth is reported to have replied that the French king must not dream of such a thing. "My *gendarme* is not made for me, nor I for him; yet I could still afford pleasure to a husband—but there are other reasons." And we are told that her Majesty raised her petticoats, upon which Harlay stooped down and kissed the royal calf. The queen was vexed at this liberty, until the ambassador demanded pardon, declaring that his master would have done the same.¹

Now the only mention we find of a mission intrusted to Harlay is in the following letter, written two years before the peace of Vervins—

TO MONSIEUR BACON.

"*Traversy*, 11th April, 1596.

"I have always had a high opinion of your affections for my service, and the manner in which you conduct public affairs; this is why I have charged the *Sieur de Sancy* (*Harlay de*) with this letter, to communicate to you my intentions, so that you may give him the aid of your credit with my cousin the Count of Essex. I beg you will employ yourself in this matter, and I will recognize the service you render me on the first opportunity. Praying that God, Monsieur Bacon, may have you in his keeping.—HENRY."

¹ Fontanieu collection. Henri IV. portefeuille, 1598—1603.

Henri IV. wanted the English fleet to succour Calais, which was hotly pressed by the Spaniards, while Essex was cruising in the Channel. Elizabeth, however, would not consent at that moment, unless promised Calais as the price of her assistance. Henri IV. was deeply mortified, and roundly swore that he would rather be bitten by a lion than by a lioness.

To return to our subject, in the beginning of 1593 the hand of the Infanta of Spain appears to have been offered to the young Duc de Guise; but soon it was discovered that the affairs of the League were going from bad to worse, and the Huguenots, to their great consternation, learned that there was a question of Henri IV. marrying the Infanta. The Huguenots were already complaining of the harsh conduct of the king, but what if he should marry the daughter of their most implacable foe? Duplessis-Mornay, who still remained the trusted friend of the king, openly expressed his alarm. According to Sully, negotiations for this alliance were actually opened by an emissary of Bernardin de Mendoza, who was introduced by Sully to Henri IV., who took care to make him go down on his knees, and who held both his hands, lest he should stab his Majesty! The king, in his turn, sent a person called La Varenne to Madrid to treat this matter, but he behaved in so arrogant a manner at the Spanish Court that he was sent home, and the scheme was dropped. Such a marriage might have saved France a costly and sanguinary war, but

it would, in all probability, have been disastrous for the Protestant powers.

It must be borne in mind, that at this period the Spaniards were still powerful in France, and that the States-General convoked by the Duc de Mayenne at the desire of Philip II. had assembled in Paris for the purpose of electing a king. Philip pretended that his daughter Isabella, as niece of the three last kings of the Valois line, should be called to the throne of France, and the Salic law abolished. In order the better to attain his purpose, Philip declared that if the Infanta were proclaimed queen, he would select a French noble for her husband; and furthermore, he promised to back up the decisions of the States-General with the *ultima ratio regum* in the shape of 14,000 well-disciplined troops, and also to furnish money for the maintenance of a French army, and the payment of deputies. The Duc de Nemours and the Duc de Guise allowed themselves to be taken by this brilliant bait. Fortunately for Henri IV., the Parliament boldly opposed the proposition of Philip, and protested against any interference with Salic law, and against any foreign House being called to the throne; and for purposes of his own the Duc de Mayenne sided with the Parliament.

In a letter written by Duplessis Mornay to the Duc de Bouillon, due mention is made of this Spanish marriage, which was to induce the Pope to grant the needed absolution.¹ In this letter, dated 18th Sept.,

¹ One reason why the Pope delayed sending an absolution to

1593, Duplessis says that "what was guess-work before has become history, for La Varenne is going to embark at La Rochelle on his way to Spain, conducted by one of Bernardin de Mendoza's gentlemen, who made this overture. He has been instructed to bring back the portrait of the Infanta, to see her on the part of the king, and to propose that a grandee shall be sent here, should the King of Spain approve. . ."

In the event of an arrangement, England and the Low Countries were to be included in the peace that was to follow. It is very doubtful, however, whether Henri IV. was more in earnest in his negotiations concerning the Infanta than in those concerning the Good Queen Bess.

The first letter to Gabrielle in the *Lettres Missives d'Henri IV.* is dated 4th February, 1593. In this Henri IV. styles her *Mon bel ange*. He said that he was clothed in sable and a widower, as far as joy

Henri IV. was that the young Prince de Condé (whose father's death we have mentioned) was next heir to the throne; he had been brought up by his mother at St. Jean d'Angely in the Protestant religion. His Holiness consequently declared that as long as he saw this young prince brought up in heresy he must withhold his absolution, for in the event of anything happening to Henri IV., France would fall again into the hands of a Huguenot king. What happened then was curious enough. Charlotte de Condé was ordered up to Paris, and on condition of turning Roman Catholic, and bringing up her son as a Papist, was declared innocent of the crime of having poisoned her husband. As to the young Henri de Condé, who was taken to mass for the first time on the 24th January, grave doubts exist as to his having been the son of the unfortunate Prince de Condé.

went; that never yet had been seen fidelity as pure as his. As soon as he had seen his sister he would send La Varenne to her.¹ "His sister" had been ordered to join her brother after the ineffectual attempt to marry the Comte de Soissons at Pau.

Other letters followed in rapid succession. On the 17th February he wrote to his good angel these charming assurances—"My love renders me as jealous of duty as of your good grace, which is my sole treasure. Believe me, my dear angel, that I value the possession of it as much as the honour of a dozen victories. Be proud of having conquered one who was never quite conquered but by you, whose feet I kiss a million times."

After each hurried visit which the amorous monarch was able to pay to his good angel his letters became more passionate. One written on the 23rd July deserves, however, some special notice, because Gabrielle d'Estrées is supposed to have exerted her influence, and not in vain, in persuading her royal lover to abjure. She thought, at that early period of their *liaison*, that should the king once more embrace the Catholic religion, he would easily obtain a divorce from the Court of Rome, and that he would marry her. In the letter in question Henri IV. wrote—"The hope of seeing you to-morrow makes me withhold my hand. It is on Sunday that I shall take the dangerous jump. . . Good-bye, my heart; come early

¹ The La Varenne afterwards went to Madrid to arrange a match with the Infanta.

to-morrow, for it seems already as if a year had passed since I saw you. I kiss a million times the pretty hands of my angel, and the lips of my dear mistress."

And on Sunday, the 25th, Henri IV. went to mass, but not before he had obliged the prelates, "in whose hands he had placed his soul," to simplify the form of his abjuration, and not without having shed abundant tears. Queen Elizabeth had sent over Sir Thomas Wilkes to try and persuade Henri IV. not to abjure, but Sir Thomas did not arrive at St. Denis until the ceremony had commenced.¹

Henri IV. now began to move once more in the matter of a divorce. His friend and adviser, Duplessis Mornay, exposed to him the dangers which his body, his soul, and his reputation all ran from the frivolous attachments in which he indulged. And with the view to a second marriage, Duplessis received permission from his Majesty to open up negotiations with Marguerite de Valois for annulling their union. This being the case, Duplessis at once sent for M. Erard, who was in the service of the Queen of Navarre, and told him that the king had made up his mind to marry again. In the *Vie de Mornay* we find—"It displeased Duplessis to see the debaucheries of this prince. On the other hand, he considered how important it was for the king and for the State that Henri IV. should have children. As for a reconciliation between him and Marguerite de Valois, there was no appearance of that. Taking advantage of an illness with which he was attacked

¹ *Lettres Missives d'Henri IV.*, t. iv. p. 14 note.

after a debauch, he accosted him in a familiar manner, saying—‘What, Sire, shall we never see an end to these amours?’ The king said—‘Why don’t they think of marrying me?’ M. du Plessis replied—‘Of a truth, Sire, to marry you no one dares think; there is double difficulty, because you must first be unmarried. But if you are serious (and I believe that you are, for you know what is required to strengthen the State) I will dare, on your order, to attempt the affair.’”

After the above conversation we are told that Henri IV. was very “difficult” on the subject, as it was against his conscience to ask for a dissolution of his marriage from the Pope, and he was not sure whether it would meet the approval of the Reformed Church. It was therefore agreed that M. Erard should be called in, and that he should be despatched to Usson to inform Marguerite de Valois that the king was determined to marry; that the condition of the kingdom and his own private affairs demanded this; that the prayers of his subjects induced him to take this course; that she could not ignore the causes of their separation, and consequently of their divorce; that she would do well not to drive him to extremities. M. Erard was to point out to the queen that she would be well treated and also honoured by posterity should she consent to forward her procuration in blank, declaring before an *Official* that she never gave her consent to the marriage, knowing in her conscience that it was contrary to the canons of the Church that she should marry a person so nearly

related to her, and demanding that the said marriage should be declared null and void. By this means, without making submission to the Pope, the king would become free and would be able to marry.

M. Erard set out on his voyage, and three months afterwards returned with the consent of the queen subject to certain conditions, with affectionate letters for M. Duplessis, and letters for the king himself, "full of submission not hoped for."

In September, 1593, we find the king writing to his wife, addressing her as *M'amyé*, expressing his satisfaction, and declaring his intention of acting towards her in the most affectionate manner.

One of the conditions upon which Marguerite de Valois insisted before consenting to a divorce was that she should receive money to pay her debts, for she was being sorely pressed by her creditors. On the 27th December Henri IV. wrote again to *M'amyé*, saying that he had taken steps to have her pension duly paid, also 250,000 crowns for the settlement of debts. He then added—"I pray you, *M'amyé*, as soon as you can to send me the procuration you know of, and to add the words which I have charged Erard to tell you, because they are necessary for the pursuit of what you know."

On the 23rd March, 1594, Henri IV. wrote an impatient letter to Duplessis to bring matters to a close as he was "determined." He added—"You know that yesterday my good city of Paris submitted. . . ."

On the 14th September the king wrote again to his wife, thanking her for her conduct, and promising to look after her interests ; and on the 24th a further letter, saying—"I have received yours by Erard, and learn with extreme satisfaction that you have sent him your procuration." But his Majesty had then to apologize that, owing to bad times, not to ill-will on his part, some of his engagements had not been kept. But all this was to be rectified.

Marguerite de Valois had not only signed the procuration demanded, but had declared that other causes for a dissolution existed in addition to those mentioned. For example, there was the just fear she entertained of the late King Charles, her brother, whose violent disposition she dreaded. Then there was disparity of religion, and sundry formalities which had been neglected.

With the procuration in his possession, the next thing for the king to do was to ascertain the value of the instrument, and to see if the dissolution could be pronounced without an appeal to the Court of Rome. To examine this serious question the king summoned a council composed of the Duc de Nevers, Cardinal Gondi, recently returned from Rome, Chancellor de Chiverny, Schomberg, De Villeroy, Harlay, Séguier, &c. The queen was duly represented, and M. du Plessis and M. Erard were also present. "The wisest men in the council, we are told, were in favour of Cardinal de Gondi, as Bishop of Paris, judging the dissolution, but he feared the anger of the Pope. . . .

Although some gnashed their teeth, the majority voted for a dissolution without the Pope."

At this juncture the Pontiff was very anxious to aid Hungary against the Turk. Cardinal Gondi thought, therefore, that before going further it would be well to ask the Holy Father, who stood in need of France, to grant Henri IV. an absolution, without mentioning anything about a dissolution. Cardinal d'Ossat was to arrange this matter with the Pope, and if his Holiness refused the absolution his sanction was to be dispensed with. That the dissolution of the king's marriage should have fallen into the background was due to the fact of it having become evident that his Majesty wished to marry La Belle Gabrielle.¹

Gregory XIII. still sat upon the Pontifical throne. He was decidedly hostile to Henri IV., and in favour of the League; he refused to believe in the sincerity of the abjuration pronounced by the French king on the 25th July, 1593, and he censured the prelates who had accepted it on the part of a lapsarian monarch. It was beyond doubt that the Pope would decline to grant the absolution. Mayenne and his colleagues were fully aware that once Henri IV. admitted into the *giron* of the Catholic Church their occupation would be gone, and their influence was all-powerful at Rome. The council was therefore perfectly justified in coming to the conclusion that the Pontiff would refuse to annul the marriage of an

¹ *Vie de Mornay*, 217.

excommunicated sovereign, and in advising their master not to appeal to him.

The consequence was, that Henri IV. could obtain no relief from the Court of Rome or from the ecclesiastical tribunals in Paris, who secretly sympathized with the League, and were afraid to incur the displeasure of the Pontiff. Neither Gregory XIII. nor the officiality of Paris would sever the matrimonial bonds which linked Henri IV. and Marguerite de Valois more or less together. Henri IV. had after a fashion played the part of the Vicar of Bray; he could hardly turn round again and play that of Henry VIII. For this he would have required a Cranmer instead of a Gondi to aid him.

There is no name in French history more honoured perhaps than that of Sully; but more than one modern writer has proved beyond a doubt that this great minister was after all no better than Bacon—the greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind—and that he could condescend to the forgery of documents. Bazin,¹ Jung,² Loiseleur,³ and Desclozeaux⁴ have given many proofs of this criminal conduct taken from the pages of the *Économies Royales*, composed by Sully and his secretaries long after the death of Henri IV. In all that concerns Gabrielle d'Estrées and the divorce of Henri IV., no one has done more to pervert the truth than Sully, through hatred of the king's mistress, and

¹ *Histoire de Louis XIII.*

² *Henri IV. écrivain.*

³ *Monographie du Château de Sully.*

⁴ *Revue Historique Mars et Avril, 1887.*

a morbid anxiety to show that he played a leading part in all the acts of Henri IV. Sully made out by means of forged letters that he was charged by the king to negotiate his divorce with Marguerite de Valois, who would not consent as long as she feared that the king would marry Gabrielle d'Estrées. As a specimen of the manner in which Sully proceeded, we may quote a letter which is to be found in his *Économies Royales*, dated 13th April, 1598, addressed to Marguerite de Valois. In this he informs his "dear queen" that France stands in need of a legitimate successor to the throne, hints that she should make overtures, and that she and the king should live together like brother and sister. As M. Desclozeaux properly remarks, had Marguerite de Valois received such a letter she would have been greatly astonished. She would have replied—"I don't understand you. You say that it will be easy for the king and myself to live like brother and sister. When you speak of overtures, do you mean for my 'un-marriage'? But that is an old affair, which was commenced in 1593, and my personal desires have had nothing to say to the failure of the negotiations up to the present. I cannot explain your ignorance of the fact that I furnished a first procuration in 1594, and that if the negotiations did not then succeed, that must be attributed to quarrels with Rome, to the expulsion of the Jesuits, to the refusal to grant the king an absolution, and to the late wars. Negotiations have recently been recom-

menced with a fair chance of success. M. Erard was the first person who made overtures to me on the part of Duplessis Mornay acting on behalf of the king. For many years past an active correspondence has been carried on between Duplessis Mornay, the king, and myself on the subject. I have even written to his mistress, Gabrielle d'Estrées, with whom I am on good terms, and who is also interested in the matter."¹

It is evident that Sully, in concocting and altering letters referring to the divorce of Henri IV., wished to make posterity believe that he was the prime mover in the whole affair. Yet several historians of repute have taken for gospel all that Sully has written concerning Gabrielle d'Estrées, whom he thoroughly hated. D'Aubigné was an austere man, much too austere for a character like that of Henri de Navarre; but in what different colours has he portrayed the king's mistress to those employed by Sully! D'Aubigné speaks of her in this manner—"The Duchesse de Beaufort made a modest use of the power she had over the king, but her relations were not so moderate. . . . We have seldom seen favourites of our kings who did not draw down upon themselves the hatred of the great by making them

¹ In a letter dated Usson, 24th January, 1595, Marguerite writing to the king speaks of the Marquise de Monceau (Gabrielle) as that honest woman she would always love. In February, 1597, she wrote to the marquise, asking her protection, and vowing her an eternal affection due to her merit. She was very anxious that her affairs should be settled.

lose what they desired, and by espousing the interests, the debts, and the vengeance of their relations. It is really marvellous how this woman, whose extreme beauty has 'nothing of thirst about it,' has been able to live rather as a queen than as a concubine for so many years and with so few enemies. State necessities were her only enemies. . . ." ¹ And D'Aubigné was a man who said, when Chastel attempted to assassinate the king—"God has smitten you in the mouth because you have denied Him with the mouth. Take care that He does not smite you in the heart, should you deny Him in the heart"—a man of plain speech, and who was quite as alive as was Sully to the ills which might befall their common country should Henri IV. marry La Belle Gabrielle.

Sully, on the contrary, did all he could to blacken the character of Gabrielle in the eyes of posterity, even expressing doubts as to Henri IV. being the father of her children.

It is perfectly clear, as regards the divorce, that Marguerite de Valois was quite as anxious as her husband for a settlement. She knew that she could never resume her position as the wife of Henri IV.; she was deeply in debt, she was tired of living a secluded life among the mountains of Auvergne, and was anxious to return to Paris. M. Erard had been instructed to tell the queen that Henri IV. hoped she would not drive him to extremities. What did this mean? That Marguerite might be prosecuted for

¹ D'Aubigné, *Hist. Universelle*, t. iii. p. 462.

having given birth, probably to three, certainly to one child, since her separation from the king? Such an impeachment would have been a great scandal, and could only have ended for Marguerite de Valois in perpetual imprisonment or in capital punishment. "Our ambassadors had not allowed the Court of Rome to remain in ignorance of this eventuality, and had quoted an example drawn from our own national history."¹ To wit, we may suppose, the example of Louis X., who, like Henri IV., was King of Navarre before being King of France, and who caused his wife, Marguerite de Bourgogne,—who, like Marguerite de Valois, was residing in a lonely castle, Chateau-Gaillard,—to be strangled.²

What did Henri IV. offer her in return for her procuration? The payment of her debts, a princely allowance, and the authorization to reside in Paris, to appear at Court, and to keep her title of queen. It is easy to understand how eagerly she accepted these propositions, which would release her from her pecuniary embarrassments, allow her to escape from what was little better than a prison, and to avoid all chance of sharing the fate of the dissolute wife of Louis *le Hutin*.

¹ Desclozeaux, *Revue Historique*.

² A note in the *Memoirs de Marguerite de Valois* (p. 445) says that the *beau* Chauvallon was one of the lovers of the queen; that the *liaison* probably commenced in 1580, and that the result was a son, who became a Capucin monk under the name of Father Ange. A number of letters which Marguerite wrote to Chauvallon are published in the *Memoirs*.

If we are to believe the *Économies Royales*, in the first days of April, 1598, Henri IV., who wished to marry Gabrielle, but who did not like to say so openly, had a conversation with Sully at Rennes, which lasted for three hours. The king, after dwelling on the necessity of having legitimate heirs to succeed to the throne, passed in review all the marriageable princesses in France and abroad, having some objection to find to each—objections to Mademoiselle de Guise, Mademoiselle de Rohan, and Mademoiselle de Conti, to the Infanta, to Arabella Stuart, the innocent victim of both Elizabeth and James I.; and these objections to Marie de Medicis—that the family to which she belonged had not enjoyed the title of prince for more than from sixty to eighty years, and that she was of the same race as Catherine de Medicis, who had done so much harm both to France and to himself. After endeavouring in vain to get Sully to suggest his marriage with Gabrielle, Henri IV. at last acknowledged his intention to espouse his mistress. Upon this Sully represented all the inconveniences of such an alliance; that it would be generally blamed, and that it would inevitably lead to intrigues and pretensions in consequence of his Majesty's children having been born under such diverse circumstances. The eldest, César, was the issue of a double adultery, the younger son, Alexandre, of a single adultery, and should the king have children after his marriage, would they recognize the right of their brothers to reign before them? Sully also reminded the king of

the report that the children were not his—"the first of your children (since you call him so). . ."

It is now argued by the critics of Sully, that he would never have dared to address the king in such language at such a moment. His Majesty was so deeply attached to Gabrielle that he contemplated marrying her; there can be no doubt as to his affection for his children, whom he spoke of as his *ouvrages charnels*; he had just made the little César governor of Brittany, had bestowed upon him the duchy of Vendôme, had legitimized him, and had affianced him, although he was only four years of age, to Louise le Lorraine, and this with royal pomp. His children, Catherine and Alexandre Monsieur, had been christened with royal splendour. At Court Gabrielle received the same honours as if she were already queen. Although not actually installed in the Louvre, her residence communicated with the palace, and at night she slept in the bed-room of the queens. When she rose in the morning the royal etiquette was observed—one of her relations handed her her chemise. When she dined she had two archers standing behind her. The Princesses of Lorraine waited upon her at table, and when necessary performed the office of lady's maids.¹

Is it probable that Sully would have ventured to speak thus to the king of his mistress and his children, and that Henri IV. should neither have replied to or resented such bold language? It was finally agreed

¹ Desclozeaux, *Revue Historique*, January, 1887, p. 278.

that his Majesty should say nothing about his intention of marrying the Duchesse de Beaufort until all the formalities relative to the divorce had been accomplished, lest the Queen Marguerite, the Pope, or some one else should interfere with the negotiations. So wrote Sully.

On the authority of Sully we have it that shortly afterwards, in a discussion which took place between Gabrielle and himself in presence of Henri IV. on the subject of the baptism of Alexandre, his Majesty turned round suddenly and said to the duchess, "If forced to choose, I could do better without ten mistresses like you than one servant like him." And his Majesty proceeded, in the presence of Gabrielle, to load him with praises. The critics point out that Sully, in commencing his report of this conversation, says that he took the king to the residence of the duchess in his own carriage. But Sully had no carriage at that time, nor was a carriage required, since the hotel of the duchess communicated with the Louvre.

It is also pointed out that when this scene is represented to have taken place, Gabrielle, who was all-powerful, was about to become a mother for the fourth time ; also that a very short time before Sully had, on the death of St. Luc, asked Henri IV. to make him Grand Master of Artillery, but Gabrielle had interfered, and had obtained the post for her own father, whose services could not be weighed in the same balance with those of Sully—a fact which displays her

influence. According to Sully, the king acknowledged that he had been unable to resist the tears and entreaties of Gabrielle, but that he should certainly have the post after D'Estrées; and, as a matter of fact, as soon as Gabrielle died her father was removed, and Sully was named to succeed him, all of which is an additional proof of the influence exercised over the king by his mistress.

It is very plainly shown that, in addition to letters already mentioned, Sully in his old age fabricated several others in connection with the divorce of his master. In 1593 the queen had given her procuration in accordance with the wishes of the king, but this had fallen out of date, and another was necessary. The second procuration was signed at Usson, the 3rd February, 1598, and this was received at the Louvre on the 9th of the same month; and yet Sully makes out that in March, 1599, he was asked by the king to write to Marguerite de Valois for the procuration, and the letter he wrote to the queen is published in the *Économies Royales*. He also makes Marguerite de Valois write a conditional agreement to accede to the wishes of Henri IV., dated Usson, 29th July, 1599, that is to say, after the death of Gabrielle. To believe Sully, therefore, the queen consented, upon certain conditions, to do in July, 1599, what she had legally consented to do on the 3rd February.

Let us pause for a moment to consider the march of events, leaving for the moment Sully and his

forgeries. In 1591 Henri IV. fell in love with Gabrielle d'Estrées. In 1593 Henri IV. was pressed by his ministers to marry again, and commenced the steps necessary to obtain a divorce. At that moment he did not contemplate marrying Gabrielle d'Estrées; he received the portraits of the Infanta of Spain and of Marie de Medicis, which he confided to the keeping of D'Aubigné. Gabrielle employed her influence to induce her royal lover to embrace the Catholic religion for the second time. The Court of Rome refused to grant an absolution. In 1594 the king entered Paris in state; he was preceded by Gabrielle, who, carried in a litter, was covered with diamonds and other precious stones. Negotiations were carried on with Queen Marguerite to obtain her consent to a divorce; matters were amicably settled between the queen and himself. César was born. In 1595 César was declared legitimate,¹ and the marriage of Gabrielle with M. de Liencourt was annulled by the Officiality of Amiens for *empêchements dirimants*—marriage contracted solely with the view

¹ The *lettres-patentes* by which César was legitimized are worth noticing. Henri IV. commenced by enumerating the services which he himself had rendered to the State, which he found on the brink of ruin. He then expressed his regret that he had no legitimate heirs, having been separated from his wife for ten years. Waiting until it should please God to give him legitimate, he had looked elsewhere, and "having recognized the great graces and perfections, both mental and physical, found in the person of our very dear and well-beloved lady, Gabrielle d'Estrées, we have for some years past sought her as the subject the most worthy of our love." Henri IV. went on to say that his conscience was quite free from reproach, as he knew the marriage contracted with M. de Liencourt to be null—in fact, that it was a sham.

of rendering Gabrielle independent of her family. She was now created Marquise de Monceaux. In September, 1595, Clement VIII. granted the absolution, and the French king was received into the bosom of the Church of Rome by the new Pontiff, who thus reversed the policy of Gregory XIII. and Innocent IX. As the affection of Henri IV. for his mistress increased, so his anxiety to obtain a divorce diminished; negotiations with Marguerite de Valois were, if not broken off, suspended, and the conditions upon which the queen had signed her procuration were only half carried out, in spite of her constant appeals. In this same year (1595) Gabrielle gave birth to Catherine Henriette, who was born in the monastery of St. Ouen, at Rouen, where the king and all his Court were residing.

In 1597 Gabrielle, at the height of her power, was created Duchesse de Beaufort. César was created Duc de Vendôme, and was affianced to Louise de Lorraine, a wealthy heiress. The next year the duchess gave birth to Alexandre, *Monsieur*.¹

¹ It may be convenient to bear in mind that three children were the fruit of the *liaison* between Henri IV. and La Belle Gabrielle—César, born at Concy in 1594; Catherine Henriette, born at Rouen in 1596; and Alexandre, born in 1598. When César was born the marriage tie which Henri IV. had forced upon Gabrielle still existed, but when the second child was born the situation had become entirely changed. Gabrielle was the declared mistress of the king, and her marriage with the Sieur de Liencourt had been annulled by the Officiality of Amiens. It is curious to read with what pomp this child was baptized; how, after pages bearing torches, came guards, Swiss, drums, trumpets, and violins; then

It will be remembered that nothing was to be said about the discussion between the king and Sully. According to the latter, his Majesty gave him to understand that he had gone a long way for the first time, but that he would not say anything to Gabrielle, lest she should fall out with him. However, in November, 1598, this pretended secret was known to every one. Gabrielle was treated as a queen by the whole Court, awaiting the moment when Clement VIII., after having granted his absolution, should grant a divorce. In this same month of November, 1598, we find Marguerite de Valois, in presence of Mathurin and Portail, notaries of Usson, making Gabrielle a present of the duchy of Etampes, which was duly accepted by the said Gabrielle as a marriage gift, in presence of Claude de Figue and Pierre de Briquet, notaries of the king, at the Châtelet of Paris.

There were several reasons in favour of the marriage in question—there was peace in the land, the Edict of Nantes and the treaty of Yervins had brought a long series of religious wars to a close. Then Henri IV. was forty-five years of age, and his robust constitution had been sorely tried by the fatigues of war, and by excesses of various kinds. He was afflicted with the

Marshal Matignon bearing a taper, Marshal de Ratz a great covered salt-cellar, the Duc d'Eperon a basin (silver-gilt), the Duc de Nevers a vase, the Duc de Nemours a towel, the Duc de Montpensier the cradle, the Prince de Conti the infant wrapped up in a silver cloth lined with ermine, the train being six yards long and borne by Mademoiselle de Guise.

gout, was subject to fever, could not sleep, and had fits of melancholy which lasted for weeks, and from which no one could arouse him but his charming Gabrielle. What annoyed the sick warrior more than all was a disease which made it painful for him to ride on horseback, and would prevent him from having any more children unless he submitted to an operation. If he could raise up no more seed and beget no heirs male of his body, why should he dream of marrying an ugly Spanish Infanta or a coarse Florentine princess of the hated Medicis family? La Rivière, his doctor in chief, gained over, it is said, by Gabrielle, persuaded the monarch that an operation would be extremely dangerous. Then why not marry Gabrielle and declare César his heir?

In the month of September, the doctors having persuaded the king of the absolute necessity of taking care of himself, he made up his mind to pass the remainder of the autumn with Gabrielle at her castle of Monceaux, near Mantes. There, surrounded by his children and a few youthful friends, he determined upon leading a domestic life, and drawing up a plan of reform with the view of relieving the distress into which the country had been plunged by bad administration and years of civil and religious wars.

There can be little doubt that Henri IV., fickle as he often showed himself, was sincerely attached to Gabrielle d'Estrées. We have already seen in what terms the austere D'Aubigné spoke of her. Cheverny said of her in 1598—"The king grants no favour and

makes no appointment unless on the demand of the duchess ; he wishes her to be thanked for all favours accorded, and to reap all the gratitude.”¹ And the Princesse de Conti observed of Gabrielle that, “enjoying this dignity, and having such great expectations, she behaved with such courtesy and attention that those who did not wish to love her could not hate her. She commanded the whole Court with the greatest gentleness, and obliged the most people possible.”² On all sides it was acknowledged that she was the most amiable of women. De Thou tells us³ that when the Duc de Mayenne saw there was nothing more to be hoped for from the Spaniards, and that the absolution of the king had killed the League, he instructed President Jeannin to persuade Gabrielle to intercede with Henri IV. in favour of himself and the princes of the Catholic party, representing that she would thus gain the affection of all good Catholics, and deserve well of the Pope. As De Thou remarks, “It was necessary to pay court to this powerful mistress in order to obtain the good graces of the king.” It is needless to say that Gabrielle did not intercede in vain.

If she persuaded Henri IV. to return to the Catholic religion she was far from being a bigot ; if she interceded on behalf of Mayenne, who promised to support the claims of her children to the throne

¹ *Memoirs of Cheverny*, t. xxxvi. (Petitot), p. 382.

² *Histoire des Amours du Grand Alcandre*.

³ *Memoirs*, t. xii. p. 425.

of France, she afterwards supported the demands of the Calvinists. Catherine de Bourbon, who declined to change her religion, like her brother and the Princess of Orange,¹ easily won over the favourite, who was naturally flattered by the adulation of the two princesses. Madame Catherine gave Gabrielle her portrait, which she had mounted in a frame of gold, and Cheverny tells us that "the skilful seduction exercised upon a powerful woman better served the Calvinist cause, and did more towards obtaining the Edict of Nantes, than all the science of the great diplomatists of the party." Strange that the Edict of Nantes should owe its origin to the mistress of Henri IV., and its revocation, at all events, in some measure to the mistress of his grandson, Louis XIV.—that mistress being Madame de Maintenon, the grand-daughter of D'Aubigné.

With one class, however, Gabrielle does not appear to have been popular. The Parisians, whose sufferings in those days were severe, felt insulted by the magnificence she displayed, which seemed to mock their misery. Nothing was too costly for Gabrielle, and the Italian financier, Zamet, was at hand to furnish money at high interest for any caprices in which the king or his mistress might indulge.

In the letters of Henri IV. we find but one which betokens any dissatisfaction with Gabrielle. It is true that in this she is accused of having twice been faithless, Bellegarde being his Majesty's "competitor."

¹ The daughter of Coligny.

After many bitter reproaches, however, the king thus concluded—"So great is my desire to see you that I would give four years of my life to be with you as soon as this letter, which I terminate by kissing your hands a million times. Well! you do not deem me worthy of your portrait."

It is true that, judging from the body of the letter, Gabrielle must have denied the soft impeachment. The king says—

"You complain of my suspicions. You write to me that you *will* keep the promises you made me lately. As the Old Testament was abolished by the coming of our Lord, so have our promises been by the letter you wrote from Compiègne. You must not write *I will*, but *I do*. Make up your mind then, my mistress, to have but one lover. You can change me or keep me. You are wrong to think that any one in the world can love you as I do. Nothing can equal my fidelity. If I have committed any infidelities, what follies will not jealousy drive one to commit? . . ."

The probability is that there were mutual recriminations, which appear to have received a satisfactory solution, for Gabrielle sent the king her portrait, which the amorous monarch acknowledged in the following letter, which, if brief, is considered a model of its kind—

"Je vous écris, mes chers amours, des pieds de votre peinture, que j'adore seulement pour ce qu'elle est faite pour vous, non qu'elle vous ressemble. J'en puis être juge compétent, vous ayant peinte en toute perfection, dans mon âme, dans mon cœur, dans mes yeux.

"Mes chères amours, Il faut dire vrai, nous nous aimons bien; certes pour femme il n'en est point de pareille à vous; pour homme, nul ne m'égale à savoir bien aimer. Ma passion est toute telle que quand je commençois à vous aimer; mon désir de vous revoir,

encore plus violent que alors ; bref je vous chéris, adore et honore miraculeusement. . . Bonsoir, mon cœur, je vous baise un million de fois les mains. Ce xxii Octobre d'Amiens."¹

In a letter supposed to have been written 21st May, 1598, Henri IV. said—

“These verses will represent my condition better and more agreeably than prose can do. I dictated, but did not arrange them. This evening we caught a number of rabbits in the park. I go out walking to see places specially worthy of wishing you there—I say specially, for in general I wish for you everywhere where duty or destiny leads me. I beg that you will return to-morrow, and believe me that I shall eat the rabbits you bring from Bene with much more appetite than those of this place. . . Love your subject who, I swear to you, my dear love, will never adore any one but you. . . Keep your promises, and you will be the happiest woman in the world. I kiss your fine eyes a million times.”

The verses which accompanied this letter are still popular in France, and are often sung. The first verse runs thus—

“Charmante Gabrielle,
Percé de mille dards,
Quand la gloire m'appelle
Sous les drapeaux de Mars
Cruelle departye,
Malheureux jour !
Que ne suis-je sans vie
Ou sans amour !”

And the last verse which shows Henri IV. determined to marry his mistress runs thus—

“Partagés ma couronne,
Le prix de ma valeur ;

¹ Voltaire mentions that it was Gabrielle who advanced her royal lover the money necessary to recapture Amiens from the Spaniards under Porto Carrero, who fell during the siege of that place.

Je la tiens de Bellone
Tenés-la de mon cœur
Cruelle departye," &c.

"Fontainebleau, 12th Sept., 1598.

"Mes belles amours. Two hours after the arrival of the bearer you will see a cavalier who loves you greatly, who is called the King of France and Navarre, title certainly honourable, but very hard to bear. That of your subject is much more delicious. . . . I see by your letter that you are in a hurry to go to St. Germain. I am glad that you like my sister; it is one of the most certain proofs that you can give me of your affection, which I cherish more than my life, although I am very fond of myself. . . ."

Two more letters of no importance close the correspondence of the king with Gabrielle d'Estrées, in *Les Lettres Missives d'Henri IV.* We shall merely remark that the last is dated October, 1598, and that the first letter to Henriette d'Entragues, Gabrielle's successor in the affections of his Majesty, is dated October, 1599.

CHAPTER XI.

DEATH OF GABRIELLE.

DURING the stay of Henri IV. at Monceaux he was taken so seriously ill that several of the most eminent physicians of Paris were sent for. They soon re-established his general health, and that being the case, the king consulted them as to the carnosity from which he was suffering. They differed in opinion from La Rivière, and decided in favour of an operation, which was skilfully and successfully performed. One of the results of this operation was that Gabrielle became once more *enceinte*; but this fact did not, as she feared it might, induce her royal lover to renounce his intention of marrying her. The wedding dresses were bought and so was the ring, and the nuptials would undoubtedly have taken place, had not the King of Terrors stepped in to forbid the banns.

The cause of Gabrielle's death at such a moment, when she was about to assume the crown and become Queen of France and Navarre, is shrouded in mystery. We find the modern critics again differing from Sully, and accusing him of further fabrications, with the view of proving that Gabrielle died by poison. Why

should Sully, long years after the event, have wished to prove this?—to let posterity assume that he was not foreign to an act which in all probability saved France from the calamities of a disputed succession. He knew that neither the Prince de Condé nor his uncles, the Prince de Conti and the Comte de Soissons, would acknowledge César de Vendôme as a rightful sovereign, and that civil war would once more rend the kingdom on the death of Henri IV. What if he could make posterity believe that he had saved the country from this catastrophe even at the expense of a crime?

Matters appear to have passed in this wise. On the approach of Easter Henri IV., on the advice of his confessor, René Benoist, the same who had been the confessor of Marie Stuart, consented to separate himself from his mistress, and he sent her to Paris to perform her devotions publicly. Gabrielle left Fontainebleau on the 5th April, 1599, supped at Melun, and slept at Savigny-le-Temple, about a couple of miles from the Seine, upon which she was to embark in order to reach the capital. The king saw her on board her barge, and by all accounts Gabrielle was deeply affected on parting with her lover. Her mind seemed to be filled with strange misgivings. At Paris she landed close to the Arsenal, where her brother-in-law, Marshal Balagny, and the Marquis de Cœuvres were waiting for her. They took her to an apartment adjoining the Arsenal, where her sister Diane de Balagny was living. There they found Mademoiselle de Guise, the wife of Marshal de Retz, her

daughters, and some other ladies. Bassompierre, who had accompanied Gabrielle on her voyage down the Seine, to play at cards with her, took his leave and returned to his master.

On the 7th April Gabrielle went to vespers in great state, her litter was followed by several carriages, and was escorted by a detachment of archers of the guard commanded by M. de Montbazon. During service Gabrielle felt overpowered by the heat, and instead of going to sup with Zamet, as she had promised, returned home and slept without feeling any pain. The next morning she went to mass at St. Germain l'Auxerrois, where she performed her Easter devotions; at two o'clock, however, she was obliged to go to bed, and at four o'clock she began to feel the pains of child-birth—pains which lasted until eight o'clock in the evening, and which recommenced on Friday morning, when she appears to have been seized with convulsions, and to have been delivered of a still-born child. She suffered the most intense agony all day, and expired at five a.m. on Saturday the 10th April.

This is the substance of the plain unvarnished tale told by most writers on the subject of the death of Gabrielle d'Estrées, not to mention Marbault, who was the first writer to expose the fabrications of Sully.

In the *Économies Royales* it is clearly hinted that Gabrielle did not die a natural death, and several French historians, like Michelet, Henri Martin, Mezerai, Sismondi, and Guizot, have repeated the story of how

the unfortunate woman was poisoned by a lemon which she ate at the house of Zamet. The way in which the story is told by Sully is very characteristic. It is inserted in the *Économies* in the form of a letter written to him by La Varenne. This real or supposed letter commenced *Monseigneur*. Now in 1599 Sully had no right to be styled *Monseigneur*. He had not yet been made a duke, and was still the Marquis de Rosny. This changing the commencement of letters was a trick constantly indulged in by Sully. Thus all the letters addressed to him by Henri IV. which are quoted in the *Économies* begin, *Mon ami*, whereas all the authentic letters of Henri IV. to his minister open with *M. de Rosny*, and after Sully was made a duke with *mon cousin*, in accordance with etiquette. Henri IV. never addressed any of his friends as *mon ami*. He addressed them all by name.

To return to the letter of La Varenne, it is written in the style which makes the *Économies* such painful reading with its interminable paragraphs. The style of La Varenne, to judge by a letter in the *Revue Historique*, was totally different. The document in question contains words which Sully was in the habit of using constantly. It began with a compliment to Sully. La Varenne assured him that the duchess loved him, and esteemed him more than any nobleman in France. In the body of the letter La Varenne himself pays Sully a compliment on his prudence, and he winds up by imploring Sully to repair to the king, as he had often heard him say that none of his

servants could so powerfully console him in his affliction. La Varenne also refers to the fact of his "holding the poor woman nearly dead in my arms." Is this probable, when Gabrielle's sister and several other ladies were present? The letter does not actually say that Gabrielle was poisoned, but it attributes her death to apoplexy and convulsions, and says not a word about her *accouchement*, the details of which must have been well known to Sully. When the funeral took place there were two coffins—one for the infant.

The consequence is that our modern critics regard the Varenne letter as a forgery, and M. Desclozeaux observes in the *Revue Historique*, that out of eleven historians who wrote before Sully, only one, D'Aubigné, believed that Gabrielle was poisoned. The authors who say nothing about poison are Cheverny, 1599; Palma Cayet, 1605; Claude Groulard, 1607; Legrain, 1614; Dupleix and L'Etoile, 1621; Pierre Mathew, Bassompierre, and Mademoiselle Guise, 1631. D'Aubigné wrote as follows—"The doctor, La Rivière, when he saw Gabrielle exclaimed, *Hic est manus Domini*.¹ It is to be noted that when she was on the point of giving the king a fourth child she took leave of him as if she were about to die, recommending her children and her servants to him, and asking him to finish Monceaux. On being asked whence these gloomy ideas, she replied that an enchanter had threatened her that a child would hinder her from reaching the point to which she aspired. She had been seized with this

¹ Evidently meaning that she had been poisoned.

apprehension when the first treaty of marriage with Florence was spoken of; but she had no fears with regard to that of Spain, which was treated at the same time. I remember that the king, having given me the two first portraits he received from these princesses, allowed me to show them to the duchess, and told me to observe what she said, which was—‘I have no fear of the black one, but I am afraid of the other.’”¹

In support of the opinion that Gabrielle died a natural death Loiseleur brings forward a very important piece of evidence in the shape of a letter written by President Jean de Vernhyes, member of the Council of Navarre, to the Duc de Ventadour, dated 16th April, 1591, that is to say, less than a week after the event he describes. The president, who, by the way, had been charged by the king to settle poor Gabrielle's debts, enters into minute details of the sufferings of Gabrielle—details which are painful to read—but does not breathe a suspicion of poison having been employed. If La Varenne omitted all mention of a still-born child, such is not the case in the letter of President de Vernhyes, which seems to have been only recently brought to light.

The doctors do not appear to have discovered any symptoms of poison; the convulsions were not regarded as anything uncommon, but as peculiar to certain conditions well known to the faculty. Henri IV. set out for Paris when he heard of Gabrielle's

¹ D'Aubigné, *Hist. Universelle*, Book V. p. 463.

illness, but she was dead before he could arrive, and his friends advised him not to see the remains, as the features of poor Gabrielle were so terribly distorted. But it evidently never entered the king's mind that there had been foul play, or else he would have ordered an inquiry; nor could he have entertained any suspicion of Zamet, in whose house the fatal lemon was said to have been eaten. His Majesty continued on good terms with Zamet, who had recently given a touching proof of his devotion both to his sovereign and to Gabrielle; he had just married his mistress by way of setting the king a good example!

Zamet was one of those needy Italian adventurers who probably came to France in the train of Catherine de Medicis. He was the son of a shoemaker at Lucca. He became valet to Henri III., the financial agent of the League, and the friend of the Duc de Mayenne, and afterwards the confidant of Henri IV. He made a colossal fortune, a fortune which surpassed anything dreamed of in France; but he joined to the luxury of the *parvenu* the taste for fine arts of an Italian, and the free and easy manners of a great nobleman. He became the favourite of Henri IV., to whom he advanced money for war and for gambling, and he lent him his splendid house near the Arsenal to meet mistresses which he provided for his Majesty, and who were forgotten almost as soon as they were known.

Voltaire has thus sketched the portrait of another actor in the drama, La Varenne—"The Pope exacted as the price of the absolution of Henri IV., and a

dispensation enabling the son of the Duc de Lorraine to marry Catherine de Bourbon, a Protestant, that the Council of Trent should be received in France and the Jesuits recalled. There were eighty articles in the Council of Trent which shocked the rights of all sovereigns, and especially the laws of France. The king did not dare to propose to the parliament 'so revolting an acceptance.' As for the re-establishment of the Jesuits, his Majesty thought that he owed this condescension to the Pope. The better to succeed, the Jesuits addressed themselves to La Varenne, who had been head cook of the king's sister—

'born in a garret, in the kitchen bred,'

and had afterwards served his Majesty as courier when he wrote to his mistresses. This new office brought him wealth and credit. The Jesuits gained him over. He was made governor of the castle of La Flèche . . . He established a Jesuit school in the town. . . ."

This was the worthy who wrote the long letter on Gabrielle's death, with three compliments, &c., to Sully, while the king's courier was waiting for the despatch!

Henri IV. was now perfectly free; Gabrielle d'Estreés was dead and gone, and the Court of Rome had pronounced the nullity of his marriage with the dissolute Marguerite de Valois. He was therefore at liberty to act up to the line of conduct embodied in his letter of the 15th April to his sister Catherine—to employ the remainder of his days in promoting

the welfare of his country. Now what France most required was to be relieved from the dread of a disputed succession; what the interest of the country demanded was that Henri IV. should marry, and should beget an heir to the throne. His friends and advisers strongly urged him to marry at once, to wed either the Infanta of Spain or the Princess of Tuscany. But hardly was Gabrielle d'Estrées in the grave than Henri IV. fell passionately in love with Henriette d'Entragues, a woman of designing character, and the daughter of designing parents—of François de Balzac d'Entragues and of Marie Touchet, the quondam mistress of Charles IX.—a woman as different as can possibly be imagined to the woman whom the king told Sully that he would like for a wife. He wanted a woman of an amiable disposition gifted with the five p's set forth in the following line—

Sit Pia, sit Prudens, Pulchra, Pudica, Potens,

and he fell in love with a vixen.

The memoirs of Bassompierre contain some curious details concerning Henri IV. and his amours at this epoch. He had accompanied Gabrielle on her last trip down the Seine, and when the king heard of the death of his mistress, he sent for him and said—“‘Bassompierre, as you were the last person who saw my mistress, remain with me to talk about her;’ so we remained alone for five or six days, except when some ambassador came to condole with him. But not many days had passed when he began to pay his attentions to

Mademoiselle d'Entragues, with whom he fell violently in love ;" and Bassompierre then relates how, before his Majesty had succeeded in that quarter, he consoled himself with a *belle garce* (fine lass) named La Glandée, whom he met at the house of Zamet ! Next, that after passing a few days in Paris, in pursuit of Mademoiselle d'Entragues, he returned to Blois, going thence to Chenonceaux to see the Queen Louise. There he fell slightly in love with one of her Majesty's maids of honour, named La Bourdaisière. He returned to Fontainebleau to pass the summer, frequently going to Malesherbes to see Mademoiselle d'Entragues.

After a short resistance on her own part and on that of her parents, Mademoiselle d'Entragues became the mistress of the king, but not before his Majesty had paid down 100,000 crowns, and had also signed an agreement to marry Henriette should she give birth to a son within a certain time. Henri Martin observes that Henri IV. could not have fallen into worse hands than those of this attractive but dangerous woman, who from her childhood had been trained in all the arts of intrigue. The amorous monarch showed Sully the written agreement which he was about to send. Sully tore it up ; but this was useless, for his Majesty wrote a second, which he handed to M. d'Entragues himself. Henriette appears to have assured the king that she would never insist upon the fulfilment of this undertaking, which she had demanded simply to satisfy the scruples of her parents, but when she found herself *enceinte* she changed her

tone, and placed her lover in a very awkward predicament, as we shall see.

The first reference which we find in the *Letters of Henri IV.* to his new *liaison* occurs in a letter addressed to Sully dated 7th June, 1594, in which he says—"Remember the orders which I gave you at once to pay my nephew, the Comte d'Auvergne, a quarter of the pension which I allow him in order that he may live." The Comte d'Auvergne was a son of Charles IX. and Marie Touchet, and consequently an illegitimate half-brother of Mademoiselle d'Entragues. We shall see how the count repaid this generosity.

On the 11th August the Chancellor was ordered to erect the domain of Verneuil into a marquisate in favour of Mademoiselle d'Entragues. This was to be done without delay. And on the 1st October the Constable Montmorency was reminded of the gray bitch which he had promised to Mademoiselle d'Entragues; but the first letter which we find addressed to the new mistress is dated the 6th October, and runs thus—

"My dear loves, La Varenne and the *laquais*, arrived at the same time. You ask me to overcome, if I love you, all the difficulties which may be placed in the way of our satisfaction. I have already sufficiently shown the force of my love by the propositions which I have made, to expect that yours (*sic*) will not raise any more obstacles. What I said before you I will perform, but nothing more. . . . I shall be glad to see M. d'Entragues, and I shall not allow him to rest until our affair is decided one way or the other. . . ."

In a note we find the following observations:—Henri IV. no doubt alludes here to the conditional

promise of marriage which he had written on the 1st of this month, and which M. d'Entragues received in exchange for his daughter. It would appear that D'Entragues demanded still more, and that his daughter, while secretly agreeing with him, and pretending to share the impatience and the desire of the king, kept throwing obstacles in the way by which the violence of the passion of this too weak-hearted prince was augmented.

It was therefore not until the middle of October, 1599, that Mademoiselle d'Entragues was handed over to the king.

It appears that shortly after the death of Henri III., or towards the end of 1592, Henri IV. sought the alliance of Ferdinand, Grand Duke of Tuscany, who before he ascended the throne was a cardinal. He obtained considerable sums of money from the Grand Duke, promising him that he would marry his niece, Marie de Medicis. This princess was born on the 26th August, 1573. When between nineteen and twenty years of age her portrait was brought to the king by Jerome de Gondi, and, as we have seen, confided by him to D'Aubigné. She seems to have been very beautiful at that period. The negotiations with the Grand Duke were dropped for many years, but when Sillery was sent to Rome to re-open the question of a divorce he was ordered to renew them. On his side Villeroy, who was Secretary of State, treated the matter of the dowry with the envoy of the Grand Duke, who had held to the French king when he

could find no other ally among the Catholic princes. At present Henri IV. owed him 2,000,000 gold crowns. Aware that he was still immensely rich, Villeroy asked for 1,500,000 crowns, while Ferdinand offered only 500,000. After some little haggling the dowry was settled at 600,000 crowns. On the 9th March Henri IV. wrote to the Grand Duke to express his satisfaction that everything had been arranged; the contract was signed at Florence on the 25th April, and the marriage was celebrated by proxy in the same city on the 5th October.

That such a length of time was allowed to elapse between the signing of the contract and the marriage by proxy at Florence is accounted for by the fact that Henri IV. had felt himself obliged to go to war with the Duke of Savoy, and, in fact, he left Paris for Moulins towards the end of June, got to Lyons on the 9th July, and then went on to Grenoble, afterwards to Chambery, and then took the command of his troops in the field.

We have little to say here on the subject of this war, which did not last more than a few months. Suffice it to say, that before braving the French king the Duke of Savoy obtained promises of support not only from the King of Spain, but from several powerful French nobles who had formerly been the ruling spirits of the League. Among the conspirators we may name the marshal Duc de Biron, to whom the Duke of Savoy promised his daughter, with an enormous dowry, giving him to understand that the

King of Spain would secure him the sovereignty of Burgundy. By this match Biron would have become the cousin of the emperor and the nephew of the King of Spain. The Marshal had no difficulty in persuading the Comte d'Auvergne and other restless and ambitious spirits in joining this conspiracy. The count is said to have been offended that Henri IV. had not married his half sister, instead of making her his mistress.

As we have already observed, Henri IV. was placed in an awkward position when he found that Mademoiselle d'Entragues intended to keep him to his written promise. He was negotiating for the hand of Marie de Medicis, and he did not dare to cancel the powers which he had given to his agents. It is clear that Madame de Verneuil, as we shall in future call her, had something to say to this conspiracy. She was *enceinte* at this moment, but she had probably heard of the negotiations with Florence. However this may be, in the *Lettres d'Henri IV.* we find his Majesty writing thus to his mistress—

“*Mademoiselle*, the love, the honour, and the favour which you have received would have restrained the lightest mind in the world but for an evil disposition like yours. I will not wound your feelings any more, although I might and ought to do so, as you well know. I beg that you will send me back the promise you wot of, and not put me to the trouble of procuring it in another manner. Return also the ring which I gave you the other day. Here is the subject of this letter, to which I hope to have an answer to-night,

“HENRY.

“*Friday Morning, 21st April, 1600.*

FONTAINEBLEAU.”

On the same day his Majesty sent a rougher letter by messenger to M. d'Entragues, demanding the promise, which, however, he refused to part with. In this second letter his Majesty declared that he was influenced by domestic and not by State reasons.

The famous promise ran thus—

“We, Henri IV., by the Grace of God, King of France and of Navarre, promise and swear before God, on the faith and word of a king, to M. François de Balzac, sire d'Entragues, knight of our orders, that, giving us for companion demoiselle Henriette, Catherine de Balzac, his daughter, in case within six months from the present date she becomes *enceinte*, and if she be delivered of a son, upon that instant we will take her as wife and legitimate spouse, and will solemnize the marriage publicly in face of our Holy Church, according to the required and accustomed rites. For the greater security of the present promise, we promise and swear as above, to ratify and renew it under our seal as soon as we shall have obtained from Our Holy Father the Pope the dissolution of the marriage between us and the Lady Marguerite of France, with permission to marry where (*sic*) it seemeth good to us. In testimony of which we have written and signed the present.

“HENRY.

“MALESHERBES, 1st Oct., 1699.”

The quarrel between the king and his mistress seems to have been made up before his Majesty left Paris; but while he was waiting at Lyons to see what turn events would take, he heard of the premature confinement of the Marquise de Verneuil, who, alarmed by a flash of lightning, had given birth to a still-born son. Thus for the third time Henri IV. found himself released from a matrimonial engagement by a miscarriage. It was so in the case of Mademoiselle Fosseuse, then with Gabrielle d'Estrées, and now with the Marquise de Verneuil.

As we have said, Henri IV. set out on his way to the front in the month of June, 1600. We are told by Bassompierre, that on his road to Lyons he tarried for a fortnight at Moulins, ostensibly to pay a visit to Queen Louise, the widow of Henri III., but in reality to renew his intercourse with La Bourdaisière. It is true that he assured Sully, who was busy getting up guns and ammunition to the army and raising money, that this delay in no way interfered with his military movements.

Before his departure for the seat of war Henri IV. entered into correspondence with Marie de Medicis. The first letter he addressed to her is dated Paris, 24th May, 1600. In it he said—

“The virtues and perfections which shine out in you, and cause you to be admired by every one, long ago kindled in me the desire to honour and serve you as you deserve: This desire has been increased by what Halincourt has brought me.¹ . . .”

Henri IV. then apologized to his future bride for not being able to assure her of his inviolable affection himself; he sent her his faithful servant Frontenac to perform that office.

“He will present you the duty of one,” concluded his Majesty, “whom heaven has dedicated to you, and caused to be born for you alone.”

Two days after the date of this letter we find his Majesty writing to Sully from Verneuil, the residence of his mistress, and saying—“God aiding, I shall be

¹ A portrait set in brilliants.

in Paris to-morrow, and shall go and dine at Zamet's, where I invite you."

On the 11th July, Frontenac having returned, the king, who was still at Moulins, where

"Pleasure lay carelessly smiling at fame,"

wrote again to Marie de Medicis. He said—

"Frontenac has depicted you in such a manner, that I love you not only as a husband should love his wife, but as a passionate lover his mistress. This is the title I shall give you until you arrive at Marseilles, where you shall exchange it for one more honourable. . . ."

And again on the 24th the king wrote another letter, commencing, "My Mistress," in which he said—

"I have just taken the waters of Pongues, which have done me good. As you wish me good health, I also recommend you to take care of yours, so that on your arrival we may get a fine child, who will make all our friends laugh and all our enemies cry. Frontenac tells me that you would like a model of the manner in which ladies dress in France. I send you some dolls [no doubt dressed in the last Paris fashions], and I will send you a good tailor with M. le Grand. . . ."

And in conclusion he asked his lovely mistress to work him a favour which he might wear during the war. The above letter was written from Lyons.

On the 31st July the king wrote to the Constable Montmorency, advising him to try the waters of Pongues, adding—

"Perhaps I shall be able to run over there. I have written to the Marquise de Verneuil to go there [having recovered from her confinement], and I shall go there to see her. . . ."

During this period Henri IV. frequently wrote to Marie de Medicis with all the fervour of a youthful admirer, imploring her to hasten her voyage, and on

the 30th September, although he was not married even by proxy until the 5th October, for the first time he addressed Marie de Medicis as "my wife," and concluded by kissing her pretty lips a hundred thousand times. The letter in question was one recommending to her the Marquise de Guercheville, the lady who had formerly resisted not only the improper advances of the king, but more serious offers.

On the 11th October, not a week after his marriage at Florence, we find Henri IV. writing two passionate letters the same day to *mon menon* and *mon cher cœur*, as he styled the Marquise de Verneuil. Bassompierre tells us that Henri IV. and his mistress met at a place called St. André, whither he was summoned. He had hardly arrived, worn out with fatigue, when the king in a towering passion called him, and told him to saddle the horses as soon as possible. Bassompierre being, as we have said, dead tired, and knowing the short duration of lovers' quarrels, and that both were anxious to make peace, delayed preparing for the road, and when the steeds were at last ready, the storm had blown over. Henri IV. often visited his mistress at this epoch, but she seems to have returned to Paris when, at the close of November, he left his quarters at Chambery in order to lay siege to fort Sainte Catherine.

After writing many letters to Marie de Medicis, in which he deplored being prevented from joining her at Lyons, at last, on the 6th December, he was able to write to "The Queen my Wife."

“My wife, by the grace of God we have arranged the capitulation for the 17th of this month. The garrison will be allowed to march out. I leave my cousin, the Comte de Soissons, and Marshal de Biron, with my army. To-morrow I shall pass the day settling about the command; I shall leave on Thursday, and I shall be with you on Saturday. I have had two attacks of fever, which obliged me to take medicine at night. I have hardly recovered, but your sight will cure me.”

And the next day he wrote—

“My wife, I have arrived at Seyssel, where I was unable to find a boat. I shall start at daybreak, so as to arrive on Sunday morning, which is all the diligence I can employ. I am impelled by my ardent desire to see you. The bearer of this will tell you all the news. I terminate kissing you a hundred thousand times.”

It was on the 25th April, 1600, that the marriage contract between the French king and Marie de Medicis was signed at Florence, at the Pitti Palace, after which *Te Deums* were sung, and the new queen dined in public, the Duke of Bracciano presenting her with water to wash her hands, and Sillery with a napkin.

Strange to say, the person selected by Henri IV. to convey his procuration to Florence was none other than Bellegarde, his quondam rival in the affections of La Belle Gabrielle and other mistresses. Only the year before a strange incident is said to have occurred. Mademoiselle d'Entragues had to complain of Bellegarde, who had tried to cajole her; she thought, too, that Henri IV. would never have consented to marry Marie de Medicis had he not suspected Bellegarde of being her lover, *inde iræ*. She therefore persuaded the Prince de Joinville, who

was violently in love with her, to assassinate him. The prince attacked the duke in front of Zamet's house when he was unarmed, wounded him in the hinder parts, and would doubtless have slain him altogether but for the arrival of some of Bellegarde's retainers, who came to the rescue. In this affair the Vidame of Mans was run through the body, and La Riviere received a sword-thrust in the loins. Henri IV., who had rushed out in his nightshirt to see what all the noise was about, was exceedingly angry with the Prince de Joinville; but in the end he appears to have made peace between him and Bellegarde.

Bellegarde was despatched with the procuration, and disembarked at Leghorn on the 20th September. On the 27th, accompanied by forty French nobles and Antonio de Medicis, and an escort of Florentine knights, who had come out to meet him, he entered Florence. The next day he presented his credentials to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. On the 4th October the Cardinal Aldobrandini, nephew and legate of the Pope, also arrived, and was received with great pomp. The following day there was high mass performed in presence of the whole Court, Bellegarde occupying a prominent place, and leading Marie de Medicis to the right hand of the cardinal. The Grand Duke placed himself on the left hand of his Eminence, and presented the proxy by which Henri IV. authorized him to marry his niece in his name. The proxy was read aloud, as also a Papal brief authorizing the marriage. After the performance of the nuptial ceremony there

was a grand banquet and other festivities, which lasted for several days.

As the French king was still at war with the Duke of Savoy, Marie de Medicis was in no haste to leave Florence. However, she set out for her new kingdom on the 13th October, accompanied by the Grand Duchess, her aunt, the Duchess of Mantua, her sister, Don Antonio, her brother, the Duke of Bracciano, and the French ambassador. On the 17th she reached Leghorn, where she met with a splendid reception, and the next day she embarked on board a state galley, which is represented as being one of the most splendid vessels which ever floated on the blue waves of the Mediterranean—poop inlaid with *lapis lazuli*, mother-of-pearl, ivory, and ebony, ornamented with emeralds and other precious stones—chief cabin rich with hangings, and devices in diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. This state galley was escorted by five other galleys furnished by the Pope, and six by the Grand Duke. Alas, the voyage was hardly a prosperous one; Malta was reached in comfort, but on arriving at Pontofino the squadron, owing to bad weather, was compelled to come to anchor, and to remain there for several days. On the 28th the galleys were able to continue their voyage, and a few days afterwards the queen disembarked at Toulon, where she remained for a couple of days to repose herself, sailing thence to Marseilles, where she disembarked on the 3rd November. On landing at the great southern port she was received by the Chancellor de Sillery, by the Constable

Montmorency, the Dukes of Nemours and Ventadour, and the civic authorities, who went on their knees to present her Majesty with the keys of the city in gold. All along the road to Lyons the queen was welcomed with enthusiasm and splendour, especially at the old Papal city of Avignon, where she was harangued by the celebrated Spanish scholar and theologian, Francisco Quarez, who expressed the hope that she would give a dauphin to France. It was not until the 4th December that her Majesty entered Lyons, where she was received with extraordinary pomp and numerous signs of affection. The king was not there, but he sent his trusty friend, Antoine de Roquelaure, to welcome her in his name, and to announce his speedy arrival.

As we have seen, Henri IV., in his letter of the 7th December, said that it would require all his diligence to get to Lyons on the 10th. As a matter of fact, he reached that city on the night of the 9th, and at once repaired to the hotel where Marie de Medicis was lodged. It was eleven o'clock, the cold was excessive, and, as no one expected him, he was kept waiting an hour and a half at the door. At length he gained admittance, and at once rushed to the room of his wife, who was just going to bed. She threw herself at his feet, he raised her up, excused himself for having kept her waiting, kissed her, and asked permission to share her couch.

Marie de Medicis no longer resembled the portrait sent to Henri IV. when the question of their marriage

first arose. She was now twenty-seven years old, she had grown stout, her eyes were large, but round and devoid of expression, and according to Capefigue the next day the king expressed his dissatisfaction *sous plus d'un rapport*, to some of his courtiers.¹ There was nothing affectionate in her manner; she was neither lively nor witty; she had no taste for the king, and took no pains to conceal her indifference; she made no effort to please or to amuse him; her character was crabbed and obstinate; she had received a Spanish education. Her husband appeared to her to be old and disagreeable, and she suspected him of being at heart a heretic.

In fact, both parties were sadly disappointed—Henri IV. as much so as our Henry VIII. with Anne of Cleves; but the French king did not have Frontenac decapitated, as the English king served Lord Cromwell and Dr. Barnes.

On the 17th the royal pair were married at the church of St. John, the Papal Legate being assisted at the ceremony by the three cardinals, Joyeuse, Gondi, and Sourdis. The royal bride appears to have retained her Tuscan attire, in spite of the dolls sent by Henri IV. to Florence—an attire overlaid with those splendid jewels which formed a considerable portion of her dowry, and were destined to create such a sensation in Paris. The display in the church was altogether magnificent, and worthy of so important an occasion, for the ceremony there

¹ Capefigue, *Hist. de la Réforme*, t. viii. p. 174.

performed was to give peace, if to neither of the principal parties concerned, to France and indeed to Europe.

The day after the wedding, peace having been signed with the Duke of Savoy, the king, anxious to return to his old and his wicked ways, set out by post for Paris, leaving the queen to follow at her leisure. Marie de Medicis is said to have been deeply offended at this abrupt departure, and this was only natural, no matter in what light she regarded her royal husband. That she herself was without sin may have been doubtful, but she was of a proud, hot-tempered, and jealous disposition, and such a slight must have stung her to the quick.¹

In the beginning of January, 1601, Henri IV. wrote several letters to the Grand Duke of Tuscany expressing his satisfaction with his niece, but we find no letter to the queen herself until the 22nd, when he sent her a few lines to announce his arrival at Briare. On the 23rd he despatched two notes, on the 24th another, on the 27th a longer and more affectionate one, in which he said—

¹ Sismondi, *Histoire des Français*, t. xxii. p. 58, in speaking of some of the nobles who accompanied Marie de Medicis to the French Court, says—"If it be true that her uncle on taking leave of her told her that her power would not be assured until she had a son, and that she should have one at no matter what price, the *cortège* which accompanied her seemed destined to realize this desire." Paul Giordino Orsini was one of the nobles in the train of the new queen, and he is said to have inspired her with a feeling stronger than friendship. Concino Concini also accompanied her Majesty.

‘your heart.’ I shall be at St. Germain on Sunday. This is the best news I can give you after the assurance that I love you better than anything in the world. . . .”

On the 9th May the king wrote to M. de la Force, regretting that the deputies from Bearn could not arrive before the 15th September to recognize the queen, as her Majesty would probably be brought to bed about that date.

On the 11th July his Majesty wrote to the constable announcing his intention of paying a visit to Languedoc. In this letter he said—

“My wife wishes to follow me, and thinks that she will suffer more separated from me than along the roads, for we can have her carried by men, and can travel by easy stages. . . .”

On the 22nd, however, the king, in a further letter to the constable, said that the doctors would not allow the queen to take the contemplated journey, and that he should go to Fontainebleau for her confinement.

On the 27th August the fickle monarch wrote from Verneuil to Sully, saying—

“I send you a letter which I have written to my wife ; you must take it to her yourself. Furnish yourself with all sorts of good reasons to prevent her from being angry at this trip, and from being dull. . . .”

The next epistle, published in the *Lettres d'Henri IV.*, is dated from Montreuil, 31st August, and runs thus—

“You will not accuse me of idleness, my heart, for I write to you every day. . . . I am going to dine at Boulogne, and to-morrow I shall be at Calais. I begin to feel dull without you. Believe me, that I shall hasten my return as much as possible. . . .”

And on the 3rd September—

“I write to you at sea, having wished to take a sail during this fine weather. Thank God! you could have written me no more agreeable news than that you find pleasure in reading. I always find something new to admire in Plutarch; to love him is to love me, for he was my tutor in my youth. My good mother, to whom I owe everything, and who watched with such affection over my good behaviour, and who did not wish, she said, to see her own son an illustrious ignoramus, put the book into my hands when I was hardly more than an infant at the breast. He has been to me, as it were, my conscience; he has whispered into my ear a great number of honest truths and excellent maxims for my guidance and the management of my affairs.”

The above charming letter was written from Calais, whither Henri IV. had gone in order to be close to Ostende, then being besieged by the Archduke Albert. Queen Elizabeth went to Dover for the same purpose, and invited her quondam admirer to cross the Channel, but he felt obliged to decline, lest he should give offence to the Catholic party in his own country. He sent Biron over to England in his place, for Biron had confessed the treason he had contemplated during the war with the Duke of Savoy, and had been pardoned.

The king wrote constantly to his wife from Calais, and on the 16th returned to Fontainebleau, “for,” as he wrote to the constable on the 19th, “I was afraid of failing in my duty as a good husband, and not being present when the queen was confined.”

On the same day his Majesty wrote to Madame de Monglat, saying that he had selected her to take care of his *son*, which son was not born until a week later.

The king had great confidence in that lady, who had reared the children of Gabrielle d'Estrées, and was destined to rear those of the Marquise de Verneuil and of other mistresses.

On the 27th September the king announced the birth of a son to several high dignitaries—to Sully, to M. de Montigny, "Governor of my good city of Paris," to Constable Montmorency, to M. des Dignièrès of the parliament of Dauphiny, and to the Cardinal d'Ossat. His Majesty also drew out a "Circular on the birth of the Dauphin," in which that event was referred to as "another miraculous proof of Divine favour since our advent to the crown."

Henri IV. was delighted with an event which not only secured the succession, but which greatly added to his own security on the throne. He treated his wife with the greatest affection for the moment. On the 29th September, he wrote in great glee to Sully—

"It is impossible to believe how well my wife is, seeing how she suffered. She does her own hair, and already speaks of getting up. She has a constitution terribly robust and strong. My son is quite well. You know how my wife has won Monceaux since she has presented me with a son. . . ."

So the *Vert Galant* and his wife must have had a bet on the event, his Majesty losing the Monceaux estate, which he had to purchase from the children of Gabrielle d'Estrées, to whom it belonged, and which was handed over to the queen.

Henri IV. kept up a correspondence both with the queen and with the favourite when away hunting.

Thus, on the 13th November, he wrote to the Marquise de Verneuil, who had been confined in October—

“ . . . Love me always, and rest assured that you will always be the only woman who will possess my love. After this verity, I kiss and re-kiss the little man a million of times.”

And on the 27th—

“ On Friday I shall go and see our son. I hope to see you on Sunday. Good-night, my heart; I kiss you a hundred thousand times.”

To Madame de Monglat the king frequently wrote, desiring to have news of his son, and great was the satisfaction this rugged warrior and universal lover expressed on hearing that he had cut his first tooth.

On the 27th October, we learn from *L'Etoile*, the dauphin made his first entry into Paris, carried in an open litter; the municipal authorities went out to meet him, and Madame de Monglat replied to their address. Passing through the city the nurse held him to her breast, so that all the people might see him. He was received with enthusiasm.

We have no intention of going into all the unseemly squabbles in which the royal pair, the favourite, and other ladies were mixed up. Sully tells us that on one occasion, just before the birth of the dauphin, words ran so high between the king and his wife that the queen flew at his Majesty, and would have struck him had he not seized her by the arm, and that there was some talk of Marie de Medicis going back to Tuscany.

There were also two serious quarrels with the

Marquise de Verneuil which deserve attention. The Prince de Joinville wished to possess Mademoiselle de Villars, and that lady, prompted by the queen, asked the prince, as the price of her virtue, to hand her over the letters which he had received from the favourite. The prince consented, and these letters, anything but flattering for the king and the queen, were shown to his Majesty by Mademoiselle de Villars. Henri IV. was furious, and for the moment Marie de Medicis thought that her rival was ruined. However, at the suggestion of some of her friends, the Marquise de Verneuil declared that the letters in question had been forged by the secretary of the Duc de Guise, and in the end she was pardoned by her too willing dupe, while Mademoiselle de Villars was driven from Court, and the unfortunate secretary thrown into prison.

In 1602 Biron, who had been pardoned the year before, entered into another conspiracy in connection with the King of Spain, the Comte d'Auvergne, and the tail of the League, and the probability is that the Marquise de Verneuil was at least cognizant of the designs of the conspirators. She considered that she should be regarded as the lawful wife of Henri IV. She had become *enceinte* within the period named, and if her first son had been still-born, she had given birth to a second son, who was alive and well. However this may have been, Biron alone suffered; he was beheaded in the Bastille on the 2nd December, the king sparing him the ignominy of a public execution. As for the Comte d'Auvergne, he was pardoned,

thanks to the influence of his sister and to the exaggerated respect which Henri IV. had for even an illegitimate descendant of the Valois line.

Whatever doubt may exist as to the part played by the favourite in 1602, there can be none with regard to her conduct in 1604. In that year there was a conspiracy hatched, having for object to place the son of the Marquise de Verneuil on the throne. Henri IV. was to be kidnapped while paying court to Mademoiselle d'Entragues, the youngest sister of the favourite, who had attracted his attention, and this part of the plan was on the point of succeeding. The king was attacked in a lonely wood one night when going to a rendezvous, but, thanks to his courage and presence of mind, he escaped from his assailants. In this plot were mixed up the dukes of Bouillon, Epemon, the Comte d'Entragues, a priest called Morgan, who had been confessor to Mary Stuart, and, as usual, the Comte d'Auvergne. The conspirators counted upon the support of the Spanish general Spinola and of the Duke of Savoy. Their designs, however, were discovered in time, and when Morgan was arrested the Marquise de Verneuil got frightened, and parted with the promise of marriage for 20,000 gold crowns. The affair was brought before parliament, and the result was that the counts D'Auvergne and D'Entragues were sentenced to death, and the Marquise de Verneuil condemned to be confined in a convent for life. The favourite loudly protested her innocence, demanding pity for her

father, a rope for her brother, and justice for herself. The reason why she wished to see the Comte d'Auvergne hanged was because he had behaved as a coward, and had turned king's evidence. He had not only revealed everything, but had offered to play the spy.

The wrath of the king soon evaporated. The Comte d'Auvergne, instead of losing his head on the block like Biron, was committed to the Bastille for life, and he did remain there for twelve years. The Comte d'Entragues was detained for a while a prisoner in his own house, and Madame de Verneuil, after remaining for a brief period in disgrace at Verneuil, and not in a convent, recovered more than her ancient power over her infatuated lover, who pretended to believe her innocent. In a letter to M. de Beaumont, 2nd July, 1604, he wrote that Morgan, Auvergne, and Entragues had confessed their guilt, but that the favourite was not aware of what had been going on. And yet the most compromising letters from Philip of Spain had been found in her house, and a short time before the conspiracy broke out she had pretended to be afflicted with religious scruples, and had asked permission to retire from Court and to live in chastity. And Henri IV. had consented, thinking that she intended retiring to Scotland, as her sister was married to the Duke of Lenox.

After Madame de Verneuil had been restored to favour we find, judging from his letters, that Henri IV., in spite of other infidelities, fell more completely

than ever under the yoke of his arrogant and exacting mistress, and this recrudescence lasted with more or less intensity until the end of 1608, when another divinity appeared on the scene.

In April, 1604, the king wrote thus to his mistress—

“If actions followed your words I should not be so dissatisfied with you as I am. Your letters speak only of affection; your acts towards me only ingratitude. For more than five years you have continued to live like this, and every one finds it strange. Judge then what it must be to me whom it so nearly concerns. It is advantageous to you that people should think that I love you, and degrading for me that they should see how I suffer because you do not love me. . . . If you will treat me as you ought to do I shall be more to you than ever; if not keep this letter as the last that you will ever receive from me, who kiss your hands a million of times.”

The submission of Henri IV. was complete. Life was a burden to him without his mistress. At the end of the year he wrote to her thus—

“My dear heart, I have received three of your letters, to which I will make one answer. I allow you to go to Boisgency, and also to see your father, whose guards have been withdrawn. I approve of your going to St. Germain to see our children. I will send La Guesle for you, for I wish you also to see the father who loves and cherishes you so much.¹ Nothing is known about your voyage.

¹ Nothing was more true than this excessive love for an unworthy person. It was the most disastrous of the weaknesses of Henri IV., for while the son of Charles IX. was undergoing perpetual imprisonment, a man so notoriously perverse and guilty as d'Entragues was set at liberty. This produced the worst possible effect both in the parliament and with the public. The queen was further estranged by Madame de Verneuil, as guilty as her father, being restored to favour [note in *Lettres d'Henri IV.*].

Love me, my *menon*, for I swear to you that all the rest of the world is nothing in comparison to you. I kiss and re-kiss you a million times."

The above letter is the last published in the *Lettres d'Henri IV.* for 1604. The first letter published for 1605, addressed to Sully, runs thus—

"I write this word to tell you to give, out of my savings, 30,000 livres to my wife, 9000 to the Comtesse de Moret, 1500 to my wife's ladies'-maids, and 1500 to Mademoiselle de Monglat to distribute to the nurse of my son, my daughter, and my other children."

On the 22nd September, 1605, Henri IV. informed Sully that d'Entragues had been found conspiring to effect the escape of the Comte d'Auvergne from the Bastille, "by means of ropes and pulleys." But we see by another letter addressed to the constable, that the king had taken this affair into his own hands, and consequently nothing was done to the culprit.

During the time that the Marquise de Verneuil was under a cloud Henri IV. worshipped other gods, or rather goddesses. There was Jacqueline de Beuil, whom he created Comtesse de Moret; Charlotte des Essarts, created Comtesse de Romorantin; and Mademoiselle de Sourdis, created Comtesse d'Etanges. The first-named was married to Philippe de Harlai, much on the same terms as Gabrielle d'Estrées had been married to M. de Liencourt, and shortly after giving birth to a son the sham marriage was annulled, and the comtesse gave her hand to the Marquis de Vardes.

As for Charlotte des Essarts, she appears, before becoming the king's mistress, to have had six children.

by Louis, Cardinal de Guise, Archbishop of Rheims. Some authorities say that there was a marriage, the Cardinal having obtained a dispensation from the Pope. By Henri IV. this lady had two daughters; but she did not long remain in favour. We are told that she was a woman of the most dissolute character.

In the *Lettres d'Henri IV.* we find his Majesty writing to Sully on the 9th April, 1608, begging him to deliver him from that woman, and to get her into a convent. In 1630 Charlotte des Essarts married Marshal l'Hôpital, and died in 1651.

In the memoirs of Bassompierre we find the following curious information. The writer says—“The king told me to go and see the Queen Marguerite on his behalf. She had just lost Saint Suliendat, her *galant*, killed by a gentleman called Charmond, whom the king caused to be beheaded shortly afterwards. He also gave me letters to take to Madame de Verneuil and to the Comtesse de Moret.”

And Bassompierre adds, that as he was very much in love with Mademoiselle d'Entragues, he could not refuse her request to show the letter intended for the Comtesse de Moret to the Marquise de Verneuil, a proceeding which naturally had the same effect as throwing oil on the fire.

As for Mademoiselle d'Entragues, she preferred Bassompierre to the king and her other admirers, and he informs us how he gave her a promise of marriage similar to that exacted by her sister from

Henri IV., after having consulted three eminent lawyers and finding that it was worthless. Such was the morality of the epoch.

A good many of the letters addressed by the king to his mistress at this period are hardly fit for publication. His passions seemed to become more ungovernable with age. In 1607 we find his Majesty once more jealous of the Prince de Joinville, and writing the following strange letter to Sully, dated 25th October—

“Although I quitted Madame de Verneuil on bad terms, I am nevertheless curious to know if there is any truth in the report, current here, that she sees the Prince de Joinville. Inquire into the truth and write me a note, which I will burn, as you must do with this. You must try and find out if it is for want of money.”

This quarrel was of no long duration. On the 13th December we find his Majesty writing to his mistress—

“My heart, I am extremely happy to think that I shall see you on Saturday. . . Make up your mind to receive me well, and to pet me, for I am fifty-four years old. I am going to bed now. I have lost my money. Good-night, my heart. I kiss you a million times.”

It was in February, 1609, that Charlotte, the third daughter of the Constable Montmorency, made her apparition at Court, and the king, though fifty-six years of age, at once conceived the most violent passion for her. In fact, at this moment there was a vacancy in the affections of the monarch, for the Marquise de Verneuil had announced her intention of uniting herself to the Duc de Guise, from whom

she had received a written promise of marriage. She may have considered it preferable to be the wife of the duke than to remain the mistress of the king; she may have considered that Henri IV., sooner than lose her, would seek a second divorce and redeem his former pledges. As it turned out, she made a miscalculation. She never became Duchesse de Guise, and she lost her royal lover, thanks to Charlotte de Montmorency.

Bassompierre gives us the following curious description of the last love-affair of the *Vert-Galant*—

“While the king was suffering from the gout he ordered M. le Grand to pass one night with him, M. de Grammont another, and myself another; we thus relieved each other every third night, during which we read *Astrée* to him, which was then in vogue, and talked to him when he was not prevented from sleeping by pain.” His Majesty having first proposed to give Bassompierre the hand of his niece, the Duchesse d’Angoulême, and then that of the Duchesse d’Aumale, the marshal asked the king if he wished him to take two wives. “Then he answered with a deep sigh, ‘Bassompierre, I wish to speak to you as a friend. I am not only in love, but I am distracted about Mademoiselle de Montmorency. Should you marry her, and should she love you, I should hate you; and should she love me, you would hate me. It would be better not to allow this matter to interfere with our friendship, for I am very fond of you. I have made up my mind to

marry her to my nephew, the Prince de Condé, and to keep her in my family. This will be the consolation and support of the old age into which I am going to enter. I shall give my nephew, who is young, and who prefers hunting a hundred thousand times to ladies, 100,000 francs a year to amuse himself with, and I desire no other favour from her beyond her affection, without pretending to anything more.'

"As he was saying this, I reflected that if I replied that I would not relinquish my pursuit, it would be a useless piece of imprudence, as he was all-powerful. I made up my mind, therefore, to yield with good grace, and replied,—'Sire, I have always ardently desired an opportunity of showing you my devotion. . . I withdraw, and I hope that this new love will give your Majesty as much joy as the loss would cause me pain, but for my consideration for your Majesty.'

"Then the king embraced me and wept, assuring me that he would do as much for my fortune as if I were one of his natural children, that he loved me dearly, &c. The king having spoken to me again of Mademoiselle d'Aumale, I said that he could prevent me from marrying, but not oblige me to marry, and there our dialogue finished.

"I went to dine with the Duc d'Epéron, and told him what the king had said to me, upon which he remarked—'It is a fancy which will pass as it came. You need not alarm yourself, for the Prince de Condé, who well knows the designs of his Majesty,

will not accept.' I endeavoured to persuade myself that it would turn out as I desired."

After dinner Bassompierre returned to see the king, and he adds in his *Memoirs*—"As Mademoiselle de Montmorency was retiring, and I was looking at her, she shrugged her shoulders, in order to show me that the king had told her what had passed. I do not lie in what I am going to say : this action of itself pierced my heart and wounded my feelings to such an extent that I could not continue playing cards. I pretended that my nose was bleeding, and left the room."

Poor Bassompierre went home and remained shut up for forty-eight hours without eating, drinking, or sleeping, and would have died but for his valet, who fetched M. de Paslin, who took Bassompierre back to Court, where every one was astonished to see him looking so pale and changed—"Two or three days afterwards," he continues, "the Prince de Condé declared that he was willing to marry Mademoiselle de Montmorency, and meeting me he said—'M. Bassompierre, I beg you will accompany me this evening to the house of Madame d'Angoulême, where I wish to pay my duty to Mademoiselle de Montmorency.' I made a low bow, but I did not go. However, not to remain idle, and to console myself for my loss, I amused myself by making it up with three ladies whom I had entirely deserted, thinking that I was going to be married; one of these was Entragues. . ."

The marriage between the prince and Mademoiselle

de Montmorency took place, and the king obliged Bassompierre to be present, and leaned on his shoulder during the ceremony to prevent him from making his escape. "Two days afterwards," says the unfortunate lover, "I fell ill of a tertian fever; and after I had had four attacks, one morning after having taken medicine, a Gascon gentleman named Noé came to see me while I was in bed, and said that he wished to fight me when I had recovered." Bassompierre, who immediately jumped out of bed and repaired to the field of honour, does not say what the duel was about, merely that "they went to Bicêtre by an extreme fog, and with two feet of snow on the ground." The duel was prevented by the watch, but not before Bassompierre had nearly killed one of the seconds, whom he mistook for Noé, so dense was the fog.

With regard to "Entragues," our hero got into a good deal of difficulty, as he had promised marriage in the event of a son being born, and failed to keep his word. Picot, in his history of the States-General, says, in a note *apropos* to a law passed against influencing judges—"At the time the famous action brought by Marie d'Entragues against Marshal Bassompierre was pending in Normandy, the two adversaries paraded Rouen with bands of gentlemen. Bassompierre visited the presidents and counsellors with one little army, and counter visits were made by another army, having at its head Marie, her mother, and all the Entragues. . . ."

Both the queen and the Marquise de Verneuil seem to have been extremely jealous of Charlotte de Montmorency, and no wonder, if there be truth in what both Tallemant des Réaux and L'Etoile assert, that the king was half-inclined to ask to be unmarried once more. Not only did Marie de Medicis believe this, but for some time she suspected that her husband intended to poison her, and refused to taste the dishes he offered her. On her side the Marquise de Verneuil upbraided her lover, and asked him if he was not ashamed of wishing to seduce the wife of his own son. It is even said that when the constable saw how matters stood he made the king sign a promise in favour of his daughter.

The Prince de Condé and Charlotte de Montmorency were married in March, 1609; and after passing a short time at Court, the prince thought it prudent to take his wife into the country, but the king soon found out their retreat. They fled to Picardy, and after that to Landrecies, in the Low Countries. Henri IV. was furious at this evasion. "Ah!" he exclaimed to Bassompierre, "that man has carried away his wife into a wood, either to strangle her or to take her out of France." There was riding in hot haste in pursuit of the fugitives, but they had made good their escape, and were soon beyond the reach of the *Vert-Galant*, whose conduct in this affair, by the way, was severely condemned by the Parisians, who were not very strict censors in matters of morality.

In his anger the king hurried down to the Parliament, without pomp or ceremony, took his seat on the lower benches,—the House being guarded merely by the ordinary ushers,—and had a decree voted by which the Prince de Condé was condemned to suffer any punishment which it might please his Majesty to order. Voltaire, who tells this story in his *History of the Parliament of Paris*, adds—"The Parliament was no doubt sure that the king would order none. But by the terms of the edict he might have ordered the penalty of death." And Voltaire condemned the Parliament for confiding such a power even to Henri IV., who was not a vindictive monarch.

The first letter written by the king after the flight of the Prince de Condé was addressed to M. du Pesché, governor of the Duchy of Guise, and is dated 29th November, 1609. The governor was to employ his garrison, and to use every means in his power to arrest the fugitives, but was to do them no bodily harm. In a postscript his Majesty added—"If they have already reached the Low Countries, and you cannot execute my orders, keep them secret." Which seems as if the conscience of his Majesty was slightly troubled.

The next day the king wrote a letter to "his brother," the Archduke of Austria, governor of the Low Countries, which he sent by Praslin, captain of his Guards, who was to explain matters. Praslin was to tell the archduke that if he afforded an asylum to the runaways, Henri IV. would look upon this as an act

of hostility towards France. His Majesty also wrote at the same time to "his good sister and niece," the archduchess, asking her aid in this matter. Then on the 5th December he wrote page after page to his ambassador at the Court of Spain, M. de Vaucellas. He said—"You know how I cherished and loved my nephew, the Prince de Condé, and all the favours he has received from me from his youth up. Now I find myself deceived, having counted upon his gratitude as well for my own satisfaction as for that of the State. For the last two years he has desired to travel abroad—that is why I determined to marry him to keep him at home; but he was no sooner married than he was again seized with a desire for travelling, which neither remonstrances nor threats could restrain. He promised my wife that he would come to see us as soon as my wife was confined.¹ Instead of that he left his home at Muret accompanied by his wife, followed by ten women and eight horses, and took the road to the Low Countries without any warning or taking leave of me, journeyed all night in 'fright and discord,' so as to arrive at Landrecies the next morning at seven o'clock in very bad weather, and worse roads. He found the city shut, and had to remain in the outskirts until ten o'clock."

His Majesty afterwards related how he had sent Praslin to the Archduke Albert in the hope that he would be allowed to bring back the fugitives, but he was not aware of the archduke's decision. On the

¹ Henriette, afterwards Queen of England, was born on the 27th November.

9th December the king forwarded a similar despatch to his ambassador at Rome, endeavouring to show, as in that sent to Madrid, that the Prince de Condé had made his escape from France for political reasons.

The archduke was afraid to accord hospitality to Condé, who consequently fled to Italy, and placed himself under the protection of the King of Spain. As for the Princesse de Condé, she was allowed to remain at Brussels, and while there Henri IV. despatched Annibale d'Estrées, Marquis de Cœuvres, the brother of his former mistress, to carry her off. It is supposed that this design would have met with success had not his Majesty imprudently boasted of the matter in presence of the queen, who warned the Spanish ambassador, who in his turn informed the archduke of the intentions of the French king. We are told that the day had even been fixed for the abduction, the 13th February, 1610, but everything was discovered in time, the schemes of Henri IV. were frustrated, and when the Spanish ministers complained everything was denied. We are given to understand by Sully that the infatuated king after this failure made up his mind to go himself to Brussels in quest of the princess, and to wage war with Spain and the empire. However, Voltaire says—"It is most false that this great monarch added to his weakness the desire, at his age, of going to war to tear a young wife away from her husband. He was incapable of anything so unjust or so ridiculous."¹

¹ *History of the Parliament of Paris*, ch. xlv.

It is true that a war with the House of Austria had for some time been brewing, but not the less true, judging by the letters of Henri IV., that that monarch was capable of going to any lengths in order to gratify his lust.

However, just as the storm was about to burst, the king, to the intense grief of the nation, was assassinated by that gloomy fanatic Ravillac, who was convinced that Henri IV., still a Huguenot at heart, was bent on declaring war against the Pope.

The following is a list of the legitimate and legitimized children of the deceased monarch:—

HENRI IV. AND MARIE DE MEDICIS.

1. Louis, born 27th September, 1601.
2. Son who died when four years of age.
3. Gaston, Duke of Orleans, &c., born 25th April, 1608.
4. Elizabeth, born 22nd November, 1602, married Philip IV., King of Spain.
5. Christine, born 1606, married Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy.
6. Henrietta Maria, born 1609, married Charles I. of England.

NATURAL CHILDREN BY GABRIELLE D'ESTRÉES, DUCHESSE DE BEAUFORT.

1. César, Duc de Vendôme.
2. Alexandre, Grand Prior of France.
3. Catherine, who married the Duc d'Elbœuf.

BY HENRIETTE D'ENTRAGUES, MARQUISE DE VERNEUIL.

1. Henry, Bishop of Metz (made bishop when in arms), afterwards created Duc de Verneuil, and married the widow of François de Bethune, Duc de Sully.
2. Gabrielle Angelique, who married the Duc d'Epermon.

BY JACQUELINE DE BEUIL, COMTESSE DE MORET.

1. Antoine, Comte de Moret.

BY CHARLOTTE DES ESSARTS, COMTESSE DE ROMORANTIN.

1. Jeanne, Abbess of Fontevrault.
2. Marie, Abbess of Chelles.

CHAPTER XII.

DIVORCE.

WE have already mentioned sundry efforts on the part of Henri IV. to obtain a divorce, which the Court of Rome for divers reasons had refused to grant, and which he himself had not pressed for while fighting for his kingdom. Why think of begetting legitimate heirs to a crown before setting it firmly on his head? However, shortly before the death of Gabrielle d'Estrées, having made up his mind to marry her, he once more opened negotiations with Rome. He had long obtained his absolution, and he was now in a position to command, having trodden all his enemies under his feet.

On the 26th September, 1598, the king arrived at Monceaux, in order to show his mistress a letter which he had written to Marguerite de Valois on the subject of their separation. At the same time his Majesty decided that Sillery, Councillor of State, President of the Parliament, a man skilled and accustomed to delicate negotiations, should be despatched to Rome. Sillery was to hurry on matters

with a Court proverbially dilatory. He was devoted to Gabrielle, who had promised him the Seals in the event of succeeding promptly, and to her satisfaction. The king himself ordered Sully to see that the councillor was supplied with everything necessary for his voyage. However, matters did not march so rapidly as was desired, and it was not until the end of January, 1599, that Sillery started on his mission.

It was necessary for the success of the negotiations with the Court of Rome that Marguerite de Valois should give a new procuration, the old one having lapsed. This required some little time, in consequence of the excessive demands of the queen. However, everything was settled in the month of February, and on the 3rd of that month Marguerite de Valois wrote to the Pope, begging him to annul the marriage of 1572, into which she had been forced through fear of her brother, Charles IX.

As regards divorce, we may state that two kinds of "hindrances" are recognized—those which render a marriage null, and which are termed *dirimants*, or irritating conditions, and those called prohibitive. The first, which alone concern us, are founded, some on natural, some on civil, and others on ecclesiastical laws. Among the first are reckoned violence and impotency, and the civil law agrees with the natural law in recognizing these as causes for annulling marriage. Difference of religion and consanguinity

are among the "hindrances" *dirimants* established by ecclesiastical law.

When the Church pronounces a marriage null, in consequence of a "hindrance" *dirimant*, the marriage is supposed never to have been contracted. Not only this, but the children of a man and those of a woman whose marriage has been thus annulled are not regarded as being born in adultery, but only in concubinage. Now, as the marriage of Gabrielle d'Estrées with M. de Liencourt was annulled by the officiality of Amiens for "hindrances" *dirimants*, the illegitimate children to whom Gabrielle gave birth were not adulterous. It was the same in the case of Henri IV. and of Marguerite de Valois. Neither César, nor Alexander Vendôme, nor Catherine, nor brother Ange were born in adultery. The consequence was, that a subsequent marriage between father and mother could legitimize these children.

It must be added at the same time, that if bride or bridegroom get married without being aware that there existed a cause of nullity, the children, in spite of the marriage being annulled, are reputed to be legitimate. Neither Henri IV. and Marguerite de Valois, nor M. de Liencourt and Gabrielle d'Estrées had children born under these circumstances, but we shall find this "exception" applied in the nineteenth century to the children of the Duc de Berri and Madame Brown.

Henri IV. himself was convinced that in the event

of marrying Gabrielle there would be no difficulty in legitimizing their children. He said to the Chancellor Cheverny that "he wished to deliver himself from the constraint and persecution which Henri III. had suffered from the princes of the blood, because he had no children."¹

We may observe here, that in 1640 the Duc d'Elbœuf, who had married Catherine, the daughter of Henri IV. and Gabrielle d'Estrées, brought an action against his brother-in-law, César Vendôme, to recover the totality of the family property, on the ground that César was born in adultery, before his mother's marriage had been annulled by the officiality of Amiens, and that consequently he could not inherit from his parents. The case was given against the Duc d'Elbœuf, the Court deciding that Gabrielle had not committed adultery.

In spite of the demands addressed to the Pope by both Henri IV. and Marguerite de Valois, his Holiness was at first inclined to refuse to annul their marriage. He was wrath with Henri IV. for having granted the Edict of Nantes, and was with difficulty appeased by Cardinal d'Ossat, who pointed out that the Catholic religion would now be re-established in Bearn, where, thirty years previously, Jeanne d'Albret had destroyed the last Catholic altar. This was one of the concessions which the most

¹ Here again are we furnished with a point of comparison between Queen Elizabeth and Henri IV.

affected Henri IV., for Bearn had been regarded, even more than Nismes and La Rochelle, as a great Protestant stronghold.

Clement VIII. was also annoyed at the opposition raised to the publication of the decisions of the Council of Trent. This publication was opposed by both Protestants and Catholics, the latter declaring these decisions to be contrary to the liberties of the Gallican Church. Nor had the Jesuits been allowed to return to France. Henri IV. was much perplexed concerning their recall; however, in the end he consented to allow Lorenzo Maggio, one of the Jesuit Fathers, to come to France, in order to plead the cause of the Order. Maggio is represented to have been not only a good man of business, but a man of wit, and in this matter able to hold his own with Henri IV. The fact of Sillery arriving in Rome with a passport for Maggio insured him a welcome, and Maggio was not long in setting out for France, armed with instructions from Acquaviva, the General of his Order.

Personally Henri IV. wished to yield to all the demands of the Papal Court, so as to be able to marry Gabrielle, but poor Gabrielle died before the divorce was pronounced. Maggio could not obtain all he wanted. The king would only consent to the Jesuits being admitted to certain portions of France on trial; they were to be judged by their works. This policy was exceedingly subtle. By

keeping matters thus in suspense the Society of Jesus was obliged to be on its good behaviour. We may add here, that when Henri IV. was assassinated in 1610, the Protestants were still in the enjoyment of all the liberties acquired by the Edict of Nantes, and the Council of Trent had not been published, although in the meantime the French king had married the Catholic princess, Marie de Medicis.

However, on the 24th September, 1599, the Pope appointed three delegates, who were to examine into the affair, and to report if there were any just grounds for pronouncing a divorce. The three delegates, as Voltaire sarcastically remarks, were Italians—the Cardinal Joyeuse, the Bishop of Arles, and the Papal nuncio, adding that the King of France was not allowed to have a successor to the throne without the permission of the Pope, and that in the case in question the ancient prohibition against marrying the daughter of one's godfather was revived.

It might have been supposed that Henri IV. would have urged the sterility and the infidelity of his wife as reasons for himself and Marguerite de Valois being put asunder; but canon law does not consider either of these as constituting a claim for annulling a marriage.

According to the opinion of the Gallican party, the French bishops might have pronounced the divorce, but Henri IV. wished that act to be accom-

plished in such a manner that no one would be able to dispute its validity.

When the question of consanguinity came to be argued, it was urged, that as Henri IV. and Marguerite de Valois were the issue of German cousins, the marriage was not lawful. To this it was replied that Gregory XIII. had accorded a dispensation in this matter. This difficulty, however, was overcome by the delegates declaring that when Gregory XIII. gave the dispensation, he was not acquainted with the whole facts of the case, such as Henri IV., in spite of having abjured the first time, remaining at heart a Protestant. But what had this to do with consanguinity?

However, the nullity of the marriage was pronounced on the 17th December, 1599, and Henri IV., on hearing of the success of his appeal to the spiritual powers, wrote an affectionate letter to Marguerite de Valois, couched in these terms—

“My Sister,¹—The delegates of our Holy Father the Pope, charged to decide upon the nullity of our marriage, have at last pronounced their verdict, in accordance with our mutual desire. I can no longer refrain from visiting you (by proxy) to renew my assurances of friendship. I send you M. de Beaumont express to perform this office, and I have commanded him to tell you, my sister, that if God has permitted the tie of our union to be dissolved, His divine justice has done this as much for our personal repose as for the welfare of the kingdom.”

¹ Marguerite de Valois after the divorce always addressed Henri IV. as “my brother.”

And his Majesty assured Marguerite de Valois that he would in future treat her with most fraternal affection, and thanked her for the ingenuousness and candour of her proceedings. And Marguerite de Valois in reply thanked her brother for behaving towards her like one of the gods, not only overwhelming her with favours, but consoling her in her affliction.

CHAPTER XIII.

CATHERINE.

ON the 31st January, 1599, was celebrated the marriage of *Madame*, the only sister of the king, with the Duc de Bar, Prince of Lorraine, in the study of the king, by the Archbishop of Rouen, the natural brother of his Majesty. The king, having perceived that *Madame* his sister wished to be married by a minister of her religion, and that the Duc de Bar, on the contrary, desired a Catholic archbishop, to remove the difficulty, called the two contracting parties and the Archbishop of Rouen into his study, and ordered him to marry them in his presence, saying that his study was sacred, and that his presence was worth any other solemnization.

This princess was forty years of age. Several great princes desired to have her for wife; but the difference of religion and of policy proved an obstacle. In her infancy Henri II., King of France, and Antoine I., King of Navarre, destined her for François *Monsieur*, who became Duc d'Alençon and Comte de Flandres. Henri III. on his return from Poland would have married her, but for the obstacles thrown in his way

by Catherine de Medicis, his mother. The Duc de Lorraine, the father of the Duc de Bar, demanded her hand, and so did the Prince de Condé. In 1583 Charles, Duke of Savoy, sent an agent for the same object, and three years afterwards Queen Elizabeth tried to persuade James, King of Scotland, to marry her, and told Catherine that she would one day be Queen of England.¹ During the last siege of Rouen the Prince of Hainault demanded her in marriage, so did the Comte de Soissons and the Duc de Montpensier.

The above is what D'Etoile has to tell us on the subject of this unfortunate princess, who was made the sport of State affairs, and condemned to a long term of single blessedness owing to the rigid manner in which she adhered to the Protestant faith. She obstinately declined to follow the example set both by her father and by her brother.

Early in life Catherine de Bourbon appears to have fallen in love with her cousin, the Comte de Soissons, who returned her affection, and wished to marry her. Henri IV. was, however, persuaded that his life would be in danger should such an alliance be concluded; he spoke with great violence on the subject, and Sully quietly relates how, by means of deceiving both parties in the grossest manner, he got hold of the

¹ Robertson, in giving an account of the marriage of James with the Princess Anne of Denmark in 1589, says that Elizabeth tried to divert him from this by recommending Catherine, the King of Navarre's sister, as a more advantageous match.—*History of Scotland*, t. xi. p. 200.

written promises of marriage they had mutually exchanged—a piece of treachery which neither party ever forgave, and over which Sully seemed to gloat with great satisfaction.

That Henri IV. should have feared for his life, as Sully would have us believe, is not likely. He no doubt considered that the position of the Comte de Soissons in the State was already sufficiently powerful, and that his marriage with Catherine de Bourbon would have rendered him more powerful still. Or, what is more probable, he may have had other matrimonial alliances in view from a very early date.

As regards what D'Etoile says concerning the King of Scotland, we know that Henri IV. long entertained the idea of uniting his sister and that monarch in holy wedlock. He first opened negotiations in this affair in 1583, when Catherine was twenty-five years of age, and when he himself was only King of Navarre.

Duplessis Mornay in his *Memoirs* gives us a curious document in reference to this matter. It is thus entitled:—

“Instruction of the King of Navarre LI.

“To treat with the Queen of England and other foreign Protestant princes, given by the King of Navarre to the Sire de Ségur, going there on his behalf in July, 1583; drawn up and minuted by M. Duplessis.”

This document opens by telling M. de Ségur to represent to the Queen of England the condition of France, and especially of the reformed Church. It afterwards draws attention to the designs of the King

of Spain, who “was conceived, born, and brought up in the Inquisition, who is the gehenna of the Papacy, whose chief agent he has been up to the present. . . Now the same judgment applies to the emperor being of the same house, nourishment, and superstition. . .”

After pointing out all the dangers to be apprehended from the union of the great Catholic powers, and how France and Spain had proposed several marriages to the King of Scotland, so as to detach him from the religion and the friendship of England, the “instructions” make this curious remark—“that princes dislike to be kept waiting; that the King of Scotland, being sought after so young, is less likely to wait than another; that they will give him a daughter of Spain, of Lorraine, or of Florence, all enemies of England, and this for State or for religious reasons.” And then—

“The best marriage appears to be that of the King of Scotland with Madame la Princesse de Navarre, princess born and nurtured in the true religion, sister of a prince whom the churches of France have chosen and recognized as a protector against the tyranny of the Pope and his adherents; also for the love which the Queen of England bore the late queen her mother. . . .”

It is then shown how such an alliance, strengthening the bonds between France and England, would thwart the designs of France and Spain. And with the view no doubt of obtaining a favourable and

speedy decision, M. de Ségur was to mention that the hand of Catherine had long been sought by the Duke of Savoy, and even by the Duc d'Anjou (?) and the King of Spain. But the King of Navarre, having only the glory of God at heart, had rejected these alliances.

The only traces of this first overture which we can discover in the *Letters of Henry IV.* are to be found in a letter addressed at the close of 1583 to Lord Burleigh, thanking him for his kindness to M. de Ségur, and another written at the same time to M. de Ségur himself, commencing thus—

“I praise God for having given so favourable a commencement to your negotiation, and having blessed your labours. . .

“(Signed) Your very affectionate master and perfect friend,

“HENRY.”

M. de Ségur's mission did not succeed, nor did another attempt made three years later, and Hume tells us why. He says¹—

“Elizabeth's usual jealousies with regard to her heirs now began to be levelled against James; and as that prince had attained the years proper for marriage, she was apprehensive lest, being strengthened by children and alliances, he should acquire greater interest and authority with her English subjects,” and consequently Wotton was ordered, in secret concert with some Scotch nobles, to obtain from them a promise that James would not be permitted to marry for three years. These nobles endeavoured to embroil

¹ Tome v. p. 365.

him with the King of Denmark, and it was even proposed that James should be kidnapped and delivered into the hands of Elizabeth. However, the conspiracy was discovered, Wotton fled the country, and James soon forgave and forgot this traitorous conduct.

And after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1559, the English historian tells us, that as the queen was now well advanced in years, and enjoyed the most uncontrolled authority over her subjects, it was not likely that the King of Scots, who was of an indolent, unambitious temper, would seek to disturb her possession of the throne, yet she could not shake off her timorous suspicions. And so far from satisfying the nation by a settlement of the succession or a declaration of James's title, she was as anxious to prevent any incident which might raise his credit in England as if he had been her immediate rival and competitor. She obliged his ministers, who were her pensioners, to throw obstacles in the way of his marriage, and during some years she succeeded in this malignant policy. He had fixed on the eldest daughter of the King of Denmark, thinking this alliance could give no umbrage, but Elizabeth "crossed" this negotiation, and the Danish monarch married his daughter to the Duke of Brunswick. James then proposed for her younger sister, but fresh obstacles were thrown in his way, and Elizabeth, merely to gain time, proposed to him the sister of the King of Navarre, a princess much older than himself, and entirely destitute of fortune. James put an end to all these machinations

by going to Denmark, marrying the king's daughter, and bringing her home. And the eldest surviving son of James afterwards married the niece of Catherine de Bourbon.¹

While Henri IV. was in great difficulty (deserted by numerous friends), James Stuart, King of Scotland, wrote to him, that if he would give him his sister in marriage he would cross over to La Rochelle at the head of his chief forces to aid him during the war. Queen Elizabeth on her side wrote to Catherine de Bourbon, whom she treated like a sister, that she would take steps during her lifetime so that the crown of England should descend after her to James Stuart. Never before did this haughty and suspicious princess speak so plainly concerning an heir to the throne; but Catherine had no desire for a throne unless she could share it with the Comte de Soissons. Such was her repugnance for the King of Scotland that her brother did not like to press her on the subject.²

In a letter addressed to the Comtesse de Gramont,³ 30th Nov., 1588, Henri IV. said—

“ . . . My soul, I have a great desire to see you. There is a man here who has brought letters to my sister from the King of Scotland. He presses me more than ever on the subject of the marriage. He offers to come himself and serve me, and to bring with him 6000 men at his own expense. He will infallibly become King of England. Prepare my sister, and ask her to be gracious to

¹ Marie de Lorraine, the mother of Mary Queen of Scots.

² *Maison de Bourbon*, t. v. p. 526.

³ La Belle Corisande.

him, showing her the position in which we stand and the greatness and virtue of this prince. I have not written to her upon this subject. Speak to her only in an off-hand manner, saying that it is time she should get married, and that there is no other match."

Voltaire quotes this letter in an addition to his *Henri IV.*, appending the following note—"Here is a singular anecdote, of which all the historians were ignorant. . . It was this same king (James VI.) whom Henri IV. always called afterwards *Maître Jacques*" (Jack of all trades).

It is rather strange, after perusing the above letter, to reflect that the interference of *La belle Corisande* in the matrimonial projects of Henri IV. should have produced a rupture between them. The Comtesse de Gramont, it may be remembered, encouraged Catherine to resist the authority of her brother, and to marry the Comte de Soissons, and the king wrote to her—

"I did not expect this from you. I have but one word to add. I will never pardon any one who attempts to set my sister and myself by the ears." (March, 1591.)

At last poor Catherine, despairing of ever being allowed to marry, wrote as follows to her brother—

"I recognize clearly, sir, that your intention is never to marry me, as you offer me only those persons whom I can never love. Well! if you require this last proof of my obedience I will no longer ask you for a husband, and will no longer speak of my marriage, which seems so disagreeable to you; but I beg you with clasped hands and with all my heart to permit me to retire from the Court to any residence which you may select. . . ."

This letter is not dated, but it is supposed to have been written in 1595, and it probably had some

effect on his Majesty, for Catherine was eventually allowed to marry the Duc de Bar, her royal brother getting Roquelaure, the boon companion of the Archbishop of Rouen, to perform the ceremony. The marriage was not a happy one. Henri IV. thought that the Pope would have easily granted a dispensation, but this was not the case. His Holiness refused, and the consequence was that the duke through religious scruples was afraid to live with his wife. However, he repaired to Rome, pleaded his own cause, the Pope yielded, and he returned to Catherine, who was devotedly attached to him. Several attempts were made to induce her to change her religion after her marriage, but she persistently refused, and in 1602 she told the king that if her conduct was prejudicial to the Duc de Bar she would return to Bearn. Two years later she died, supposed, says L'Etoile, to have died from taking drugs and "red silk" in the hope of becoming a mother. The king, who was passionately fond of his sister, was greatly grieved. He was seldom known to have shed a tear, but when he heard of Catherine's death he flung himself on his bed and wept bitterly—wept for her as Frederick the Great wept for Wilhelmina, Margravine of Baireuth.

CHAPTER XIV.

LOUIS XIII. AND ANNE OF AUSTRIA.

HENRI IV. had not been many weeks in the grave when Marie de Medicis determined to reverse his policy, and to reconcile France and Spain by means of a double marriage, between Louis XIII. and the Infanta, and between the Prince of Asturia and Madame Elizabeth. Henri IV. had promised to give his eldest daughter to the Duke of Savoy, who evinced the greatest desire to obtain her hand. Sully was in favour of this match, and retired from Court when Marie de Medicis expressed her determination that her eldest daughter should be Queen of Spain. He must also have heartily disapproved of the Infanta, better known now as Anne of Austria, marrying the son of his old master, as her grandfather had been the most terrible enemy of France. Then Sully was a staunch Protestant, and naturally viewed with alarm and distrust this Catholic alliance. England, the Netherlands, and the Protestant princes of Germany were all opposed to the match, and it was deemed expedient to despatch the Duc de Bouillon—a Protestant—to England to appease King

James, and to endeavour to remove his apprehensions. The mission of the duke was not successful, nor did the French envoy sent to the Hague, nor Marshal Schomberg, who visited Germany in the hopes of arranging matters there, allay hostility. "The treaty between Henri IV. with the Duke of Savoy," says Henri Martin,¹ "was torn up; the least which the dignity of France required was to arrange an honourable settlement for Charles Emmanuel with Spain, which had been irritated by his defection. Nothing was done, and France basely permitted that prince, in order to save his country from a Spanish invasion, to be forced into sending his son to Madrid to ask, on his knees, pardon from the King of Spain for having wished the French alliance."

In spite of all the opposition raised against the double marriage, Marie de Medicis and her ministers pursued the policy they had marked out, and on the 30th April, 1611, the preliminaries for the marriages were signed at Fontainebleau by Villeroi and the Spanish ambassador, Inigo de Cardenas. It was there stipulated that Louis XIII. should marry the Infanta, and that Prince Philip of Spain should marry Madame Elizabeth of France, and that the Pope and the Grand Duke of Tuscany should arbitrate as to the conditions of this double marriage. The French and Spanish Courts concluded a defensive alliance; there was also signed a reciprocal extradition treaty concerning criminals guilty of *lèse majesté*.

¹ *Histoire de France*, t. xi. p. 17.

These matters were kept secret for a time, but in January 1612, Marie de Medicis, feeling more confidence in her position, convoked an extraordinary council of princes, cardinals, dukes, prelates, and great officers of the Crown present in Paris, and announced to them the state in which the negotiations stood.

At first the double marriages were approved of, not only by Condé, Soissons, Guise, the Lorraine princes, and the heretic Duc de Bouillon who reigned at Sedan, but by several of the most trusted friends of the late monarch, such as the old Huguenot chief, Lesdiguières, and not a single voice was raised in the assembly in favour of the policy of Henri IV. It is true that a few weeks later both Condé and Soissons changed their minds, probably because their approval had not been sufficiently remunerated. However this may be, they left the Court by way of protesting against the matrimonial alliance with Spain. No notice was taken of the action of the princes, who were soon induced to return. The Court threw off its mourning, and the publication of the royal betrothal was celebrated with great magnificence, the festivities lasting for three days, and costing vast sums of money. Bassompierre spent on his own account 5000 gold crowns, and some other great nobles a similar sum.

In August 1612 the Duc de Mayenne was sent as an extraordinary ambassador to Madrid to demand the hand of the Infanta in the name of the King

of France, while the Duke of Pastrana was sent to Paris to demand the hand of Madame Elizabeth on the part of the Prince of Asturia. The two marriage contracts were signed at Madrid on the 22nd, and at Paris on the 25th August. A dowry of 500,000 crowns was assigned to both the princesses. The contract of Louis XIII., by the way, contained a clause of great importance, to wit, the renunciation on the part of the Infanta, express and absolute, of the inheritance of her parents, so that no portion of the Spanish succession could ever pass to the House of Bourbon. We shall see hereafter how this renunciation, signed by the hand of the Infanta, was observed. The contracts having been signed, sealed, and delivered, it was agreed that the exchange of the two princesses should not take place until they were twelve years of age.¹

In 1614 Condé and Bouillon again left the Court, with Mayenne, Vendôme, and other great nobles, and took up arms against the queen regent. They complained that her Majesty was surrounded by persons who wished to reign in confusion, who spent large sums of money, and were guilty of malversation; that France had lost her reputation in the eyes of foreigners, that the policy of the late king was not carried out, that the marriage with the Duke of Savoy had been broken off, and the double marriages concluded with Spain without the three orders of the

¹ Anne of Austria was born 22nd Sept., 1601, a few days after Louis XIII.

kingdom having been consulted, &c., &c.; and Condé concluded his letter, in which all the grievances of his party were set forth, by demanding that the States-General should be summoned within three months, and that the Spanish marriages should be suspended until their opinion had been learned. A copy of this manifesto was addressed to the Parliament, which forwarded it to the queen, and the queen, taking alarm, and refusing to follow the vigorous advice of Villeroi and Jeannin, negotiated. She made no difficulty about promising to assemble the States-General, and to defer the Spanish marriages until the king had attained his majority, that is to say, for five months. The consequence of these concessions was, that on the 15th May peace was signed between the rebel princes and the Court at St. Menehould, a peace which was not of long duration.

Louis XIII. came of age in September 1614, and in October the States-General assembled in Paris in the vast hall of the convent of the Augustins. The three orders appeared in force. The clergy counted 140 members, 5 cardinals, 7 archbishops, 47 bishops, &c.; the nobles numbered 132, and the third estate 192 representatives. Among the clergy came one representative, twenty-nine years of age, originally destined for the career of arms, but in 1614 made Bishop of Luçon, one of the poorest and most disagreeable sees of France. The name of the young prelate was Armand Jean du Plessis de Richelieu.

The question of the double marriages was never

thoroughly discussed by the States-General, and it was not until the 12th. December that the matter was brought forward at all. Then we find that the clergy, "seized by a sudden fit of enthusiasm," asked the king to accomplish as soon as possible his sacred marriage with the Infanta of Spain, which would benefit religion, and would secure the blessings of peace for two powerful nations. The Bishop of Luçon, who little foresaw all the trouble that this same Spanish alliance would one day cause him, acted as the orator of his order, immediately revealing a talent and an eloquence which astonished all who heard him. The nobles followed in the wake of the clergy, thus sacrificing the popularity they had acquired by contending against the League. The third estate, finding itself alone, and considering that resistance upon its part might lead to civil strife and war with Spain, hesitated. At first it was determined to protest by silence, but in the end it was decided to thank the queen-mother for having preserved peace, and for having concluded marriages and alliances to that end. There was no mention made of Spain, nor was any comment added to this surly consent.

In 1615 came fresh troubles; no sooner had the States-General terminated their sittings, than the Parliament of Paris met in a somewhat irregular manner. The king forbade the Parliament to deliberate upon State affairs, and the Parliament was consequently driven to remonstrate. Its remonstrances, rejected at first, were afterwards listened to by the

king; they in many respects resembled the Condé manifesto. The youthful monarch was asked to keep up the alliances formed by his father, &c. The remonstrances were considered by the Court as calumnious, and the Parliament was again ordered not to meddle with the affairs of the State; but the Parliament resisted with obstinacy, and the king consented to receive a second deputation.

The fact is that behind the Parliament were the disaffected princes, and behind the princes the Huguenots, with Condé, Bouillon, Mayenne, and Longueville. The Huguenots were about to hold their triennial parliament at Grenoble, and it was supposed that they intended to protest against the Spanish marriages, against the conclusion of which the English ambassador had again raised his voice. But the queen-mother was not to be moved from her purpose. The date was approaching upon which it had been agreed that the exchange of the two princesses should be effected, and Marie de Medicis was preparing to start with the king to meet the new queen. Every effort was made to induce Condé to cease his opposition, and to accompany the king to Guienne, but in vain. He inveighed against the corruption of the Court, and demanded, among other things, that the marriages should be put off until the king had really attained the age of manhood. Condé wrote to the Pope to justify his action in taking up arms, and at the same time to the Protestant Assembly at Grenoble and to the city of La Rochelle

for aid. The Pope called upon Condé to submit to the royal authority, and not only advised Marie de Medicis to carry out the marriages, but, according to Cardenas, offered to go to France to arrange matters. Concini and his wife, together with Villeroi and Jeannin, advised the queen-mother to put off her voyage, but she would hear of no delay, and she took the king to Bastille to draw out the 1,200,000 livres necessary for the expenses of the journey. Military measures were adopted for the protection of Paris and other cities and towns against Condé, the princes, and their adherents, and on the 17th August the queen-mother, the king, and the Court took the road to Bordeaux.

The royal escort was composed of 8000 foot-soldiers and 2000 horse, under the orders of the Duc de Guise and Epernon—a force considered necessary to thwart the evil designs of the disaffected princes and the Huguenots. The old Marshal Bois-Dauphin was intrusted with the protection of the capital, and the royal children were sent for safety to Vincennes. The Spanish ambassador, too, recommended his master to send not less than 6000 infantry and 1000 cavalry into France, because England had furnished the malcontents with 40,000 crowns.

It was 5 a.m. on the 17th August when the king, after hearing mass at the Bourbon chapel, left Paris. The queen, carried in a litter and followed by a number of princesses and ladies, started from the Louvre at 10 a.m. As for Madame Elizabeth, the

municipal authorities, clothed in their rich liveries and all on horseback, went to fetch her at the Louvre, and "carried her in a soft litter open on all sides and sparkling with gold embroideries and silver on red velvet." They accompanied her as far as Bourg-le-Reine, paying her great honours and congratulations. Before this strange wedding-party left the capital, we must mention that Le Jay, the president of the Parliament, was suddenly arrested by the archers of the guard and sent off to the castle of Amboise, for the Court had little confidence in the Parliament of Paris.

The royal *cortége* arrived safely at Tours, and from Tours proceeded to Poitiers, "12,000 horsemen," we are told, "being distributed on the flanks and wings; the whole regiment of the guards was at its full strength of 3000 arquebuses, and the gallant Swiss, helmet on head and pistol in hand, resolved to pass over the bodies of those who should attempt to oppose the passage of the rivers of Aquitaine." It seems that this force, ill-fed, suffered greatly during the march from fever, dropsy, pleurisy, &c., and "filled the hospitals and the taverns."

There was a good deal of marching and counter-marching up-hill and down again on the part of the royal troops and those of Condé and de Rohan, but the two parties did not come to blows, and the king reached Bordeaux in safety on the 7th October, 1615. The royal standard was hoisted over the castle of Ha, where Marie de Medicis, Louis XIII., and Madame

Elizabeth shut themselves up while the preparations for the double marriages were being pursued amid the threats of the feudal nobility. Fortunately for the Court, the people sided with the king, and declared themselves in favour of the Catholic alliance.

On the 18th October, according to treaty, the marriages by procuration took place at Burgos and Bordeaux, the Duc de Guise marrying the Infanta in the name of Louis XIII., and the Duke of Lerma marrying Madame Elizabeth for the Spanish prince. Naturally the greatest magnificence was displayed during these ceremonies, the two Courts vying with each other in splendour.

After the marriage by procuration came the exchange of the two princesses on the Bidassoa where the river was a hundred and fifty paces wide. Gorgeous pavilions were erected on either bank to receive the princesses on alighting from their litters. It was greatly feared that the Duc de Rohan would have attacked the king between Bordeaux and Bayonne, but the Bidassoa was safely reached. There some slight delay occurred which greatly annoyed Madame Elizabeth, who, "red with anger, took off her gloves and flung them in the fire, asking when the ceremonies would be all finished." But, as Capefigue remarks, Philip III. in giving his daughter to the King of France had certain precautions to take, adding—"There exists in the convent of the Augustins at Burgos a series of documents relative to the formalities which were imposed on the Infanta."

The first of these documents was the renunciation by the princess of her legitimate rights to the crown of Spain, entirely in her own handwriting, containing the most minute precautions which could be devised by the Spanish chancellery. It ran thus—"I, Dona Ana, Infanta of Spain, and, by the grace of God, promised and future Queen of France, eldest daughter of the very high, very excellent, and very powerful prince, Philip III., by the same grace of God, king Catholic," &c. Then followed the renunciation in due and legal form, the Infanta also expressing herself satisfied with her dowry, larger than that ever before granted to a Spanish princess. And laying hand on the holy Gospels, she swore to observe all she had written, in spite of all persuasion, seduction, or reasons advanced by the king her husband.

The household of the Infanta was entirely Spanish—the confessor, the first almoner, the ordinary confessor, the doctors, apothecaries, head cook, under cooks, cup-bearers, keepers of the birds, keeper of the keys, head falconer, footman, sweeper of the chambers, &c. The Comtesse de la Torre lady of honour, with mistress of the robes, maids of honour, ladies'-maids, &c. In all over one hundred persons, costing 180,000 reals a month. It was with this *cortége* that the Infanta reached the banks of the Bidassoa.

There was a military display on either side, and a quarter of an hour before the princesses made their appearance, two Secretaries of State, one French the

other Spanish, with a number of councillors, met on the pavilions moored in the centre of the river, and read over the marriage acts, &c. Then came the princesses, who embarked at the same moment in their barges, each attended by a number of nobles; they met on board the pavilion, the Duc de Guise giving his hand to *Madame*, and the Duc d'Usseda his hand to the Infanta. After the Spanish nobles had saluted *Madame*, and the French nobles had saluted the Infanta, the two youthful queens advanced towards each other slowly, kissed each other, and remained talking for some time. Then the Duc de Guise led away the Infanta, and the Duc d'Usseda *Madame* Elizabeth, and the exchange was completed.

The Infanta at once started for Bordeaux, strongly escorted, the Huguenots incessantly prancing round the royal army. There was an engagement with pistols at Casteljaloux, and some musket shots were exchanged as the bride entered Bazas; but at last Bordeaux was reached in safety. A magnificent reception was given to the Infanta, and on the 25th November the royal pair were united in the Cathedral of Bordeaux by the Bishop of Saintes, the natural son of Bassompierre and Mademoiselle d'Entragues. The Archbishop of Bordeaux, the Cardinal de Sourdis, was to have performed the ceremony, but he had been suddenly obliged to leave the city. He had had the audacity, while the king was in Bordeaux, to force open the doors of the gaol and to allow a man

condemned to death to make his escape; in defending his post the gaoler was killed.

In an account of the ceremony given by the *Mercure de France*, we read that "the king often looked at the queen and smiled; she, although sinking under the weight of her robes and jewels, perspiring big drops, could not help smiling at him with marvellous grace and majesty." This was very different to the marriage at Lyons. Unlike Henri IV. and Marie de Medicis, who were not in the bloom of youth it is true, Louis XIII. and Anne of Austria seemed delighted with each other.

Grave historians say that, seeing the extreme youth of bride and bridegroom, it was thought better that they should remain apart, husband and wife only in name, for some years; but if we are to believe Dr. Hérouard,¹ the royal physician, such was not the case.

¹ Hérouard kept a diary, in which he noted down all the doings of Louis XIII. from his infancy. Thus we find that the little prince in his—

"2nd year—Ate meat for the first time. It was duck.

"3rd year.—M. le Dauphin was whipped for the first time for being obstinate.

"The Venetian ambassador came to see him.

"He slobbers and gets angry because he cannot speak.

"4th year (2nd March, 1605).—The king amused himself a great deal with him. . . . The king said to him, 'I wish you to make a little child with the Infanta; I wish you to make her a little dauphin like yourself.'—'*Hwoo, non, papa.*'

"28th April.—Received the ambassadors of the Count Palatine and the Marquis de Brandebourg.

"11th June.—Received the Comte de Saure on his return from Spain, who presented him with the compliments of the Infanta (a week older than himself).

However this may be, it was many a long year before a successor to the crown was born.

By this alliance one of the chief objects of the League was accomplished. It was thought that Condé and his friends, once the nuptial benediction pronounced, would lay down their arms and submit to the inevitable. Marie de Medicis did what she could to effect an arrangement with the princes, wishing to avoid a battle on the road to Paris; but her efforts were of no avail until the Duc de Nevers and the English ambassador offered to mediate. Just then negotiations, we may mention, had been opened for the marriage of the Prince of Wales with the second daughter of Henri IV. This proposal was accepted, and a truce was signed on the 20th January. On the 17th December the Court left Bordeaux, escorted by the Duc d'Epemon, and protected by two army corps assembled in Poitou, and Tours was reached on the 25th January. If the troops had suffered from heat during the march to Bordeaux, their sufferings were still greater from cold during the march back; snow, rain, and frost killing several thousand men.

At Tours a halt was called, and it was not until the Court had made numerous concessions to the feudal party that it ventured to continue its journey to the capital. Before reaching his good city of

"15th Sept.—Received Lord North and Lord Norris.

"2nd Oct.—The Queen Marguerite (the first wife of Henri IV.) comes to see him.

"In his 6th year.—M. le Dauphin void remuer M. d'Orleans."

Paris, the king wrote to the municipal authorities forbidding all *fêtes* and all expression of public joy on his arrival "with the queen, our very dear spouse and companion," such as had been manifested in 1614 when he returned from Brittany. It was felt that the royalty had been humiliated by the last treaty, and that it was a time rather for sackcloth and ashes than for piping and feasting. By the treaty of Loudun the Court had merely bought off the hostility of the princes. In the way of other concessions it had promised to inquire further into the assassination of Henri IV., to annul a recent decree to the effect that a monarch could be deposed for heresy by the spiritual powers, to disavow the reception of the Council of Trent, to declare that the oath concerning the extirpation of heretics did not concern the subjects of the King of France, and to confirm the Calvinists in all their rights. A curious sequel to a Catholic marriage.

According to Richelieu, the Spanish marriages cost the country some 20,000,000 livres—an enormous sum for the epoch—and, though no battles were fought, cost blood as well as treasure.

In spite of the commands of the king, there was a certain amount of rejoicing when he entered Paris on the 16th May, 1616, at 5 p.m. Sixteen colonels turned out to greet their majesties, each colonel at the head of 500 men, "well covered and armed." There were to have been only 8000 men, but 12,000 assembled. Twelve large tents were pitched between Montronge

and Paris. The king arrived on horseback, the queen being in a litter, in which one could perceive only precious stones and gold and silver embroidery. The queen's mules got frightened when a salute was fired, and she was taken out and put into a carriage, and at last the Louvre was reached. The Parisians, who had been told that the queen was plain, were delighted with her personal appearance, and manifested their satisfaction. They found that in features the king and his wife greatly resembled each other. Alas, in features only.

On the subject of the indifference with which Louis XIII. treated Anne of Austria after their marriage, M. Armand Baschet wrote an interesting volume entitled *Le roi chez la reine*. Let it be remembered that the king and the queen were born within a week of each other in 1601, and that they were consequently mere children when they were married. In spite of this fact, which should have inspired patience, M. Armand Baschet observes that "the inconceivable attitude of Louis XIII. turned the matter into a question of state. The abstention was public. The House of Spain saw in this coolness on the part of the king a mark of contempt, and almost an insult." And we shall see to what an extent this delicate affair engaged the attention of the Papal Nuncio, the king's confessor, the Duc de Luynes, and the Spanish and Venetian ambassadors.

That Louis XIII. was still a child, and thought as a child, was sufficiently clear from the manner in

which he is represented to have passed his time while awaiting the arrival of his wife at Bordeaux. In addition to hawking and farces, we find him amusing himself with little silver soldiers, singing hymns, and plundering the sweetmeats of Cardinal Sourdis. In a document which is entitled, *Ce qui s'est passé lors de la consommation du mariage du Roi*, supposed to have been drawn up by the queen-mother, referring to what passed after the marriage ceremony, we find it stated that—

“As soon as supper was over the king went to bed in his own room, according to his usual custom. The queen-mother, who had up to that time remained in the chamber of the little queen, came to find him at about 8 o'clock passing through the hall, from which she made the guards and every one else retire; and finding the king in his bed, addressed these words to him—‘My son, it is not sufficient to be married; you must come and see the queen your wife, who is waiting for you.’

“The king answered—‘Madam, I was only awaiting your orders. If you like I will go and find her with you.’

“At the same time they gave him a dressing-gown and slippers lined with fur, and thus he went with the queen-mother by the said hall into the chamber of the little queen, into which entered with their Majesties two nurses, De Souvray, governor, Hérourard, first doctor, the Marquis de Rambouillet, master of the robes, carrying the king's sword, and Belingham,

first valet-de-chambre, with the candlestick. As the queen approached the bed she said to the little queen—‘My daughter, here is your husband, whom I bring to you; receive him and love him well, I beg of you.’ To which she replied in Spanish that it was her intention to obey and to please him. . . . And the king having gone to bed, the queen-mother directed every one to leave the room, with the exception of the two nurses. Two hours afterwards the king returned to his own bed.”

We cannot enter into all the details given by what is regarded as an official document—details moreover founded upon fiction, invented for political purposes, and to keep the tongues of the wits from wagging too freely. What seems to be perfectly true is, that for four years longer these children lived apart, and not as husband and wife. Three years after the marriage we learn that the Papal Nuncio and the Spanish ambassador tried to persuade the king not to leave the young queen in this *abandon conjugal*, contrary to the law of nature and to social law. To all advice upon this subject the king replied that there was no reason to be in a hurry, and that he could not take too much care of his health.

In July, 1617, there was great commotion at the Court, caused by the rumour that the king had fallen in love with Mlle. de Montgiron, one of the queen’s maids of honour. It was said that his Majesty had remained shut up with her all night. Upon this Guido Bentivoglio, the Papal Nuncio, at

once wrote off to Cardinal Scipio Borghese, saying—“Not only has this report not been confirmed, but it is known that up to the present the king has not manifested the slightest inclination for women *in materia di donne*. The same rumour made the queen indulge in a fit of jealousy. De Luynes has behaved very well in this matter, endeavouring to influence the king in favour of the queen, and trying to persuade him to sleep with her. But the king will not come to a decision” However this may be, the Nuncio reported that Mlle. de Montgiron had been removed from the Court, and was to be married.

Ten days later, 19th July, 1617, the Nuncio wrote another despatch on this subject, saying that De Luynes was doing what he could to hasten the marriage of Mlle. de Montgiron, being evidently afraid lest she should come between Louis XIII. and his wife. “The king,” added the Nuncio, “always puts off sleeping with the queen to some future date.”

On the 5th December the Nuncio wrote—“Father Arnoux has told me in the greatest confidence that the last time the king confessed he did all he could on behalf of the queen, trying to persuade the king to show some inclination for her, to love her, and to be a good husband. The said father also assured me that De Luynes had done the same, knowing that it is the king’s interest to be on good terms with Spain.”

But all the efforts of the Cardinal Guido Bentivoglio, of the Duke of Monteleone, the Spanish

ambassador, of Father Arnoux, the king's confessor, and of the Duc de Luynes to excite a tender passion in the breast of the king were vain. It is amusing to find the Nuncio writing to Cardinal Scipio Borghese, saying—"The subject is rather delicate, and that is why I prefer writing separately to your illustrious lordship. You can communicate the matter to the Pope or not, as you wish." And certainly the despatch which the Nuncio wrote upon the 17th January, 1618, was hardly fit for the eyes of the Pontiff. In it Cardinal Guido Bentivoglio revealed to Cardinal Scipio Borghese that he had given certain advice to the king, but that his confessor had persuaded him not to commit such a sin.

The Pope's nephew seems to have replied to the effect that the Court of Rome greatly regretted the coldness which reigned between the king and the queen; reminded the Nuncio how ardently the Pontifical Court had encouraged the marriage; and pointed out what a blow it would be to the Catholic religion should his most Christian Majesty leave no direct heir to the throne. He was strongly recommended to keep his ears and his eyes open, but we do not find that Cardinal Scipio encouraged Cardinal Guido to carry matters to the extremity he proposed.

On the 10th February the Nuncio in a despatch complained of Louis XIII. still indulging in childish amusements, and being inclined to keep bad company. He spoke to Father Arnoux on the subject, and begged him to appeal to the royal conscience. He

added—"The last time the king confessed, the day of the Purification of the Holy Virgin, the said father acquitted himself of this duty with so much efficacy that the following days the fruits were remarked. . . . Altogether, seeing the age of his Majesty, we must be indulgent; besides, he has some royal qualities strongly pronounced, such as piety, justice, dissimulation, silence, the patience with which he allows himself to be advised, and the firmness with which he follows good counsel."

And on the 14th April, in another despatch, the Nuncio expressed his opinion that the Court of Spain and all the other courts would find it strange that the king, now eighteen years of age, did not assume the attitude of a husband. He had reported to the Duke of Monteleone and to the Countess de la Torre, the first Spanish lady-in-waiting on the queen, that Father Arnoux had done all he could to get the king to consummate his marriage with the queen. He felt deeply that the Huguenots were talking of the matter and interpreting it to suit their ends. He had spoken again to Father Arnoux, who had told him that the king was very modest, and had no inclination for any woman. The cardinal added—"His father (Henri IV.) began late, but he made up for lost time by far too many excesses. God grant that if his son imitates him up to the present he may not follow his example at a more mature age."

A short time after this his Majesty appears to have made a strange reply to Father Arnoux during

confession. The good father, according to the Nuncio, had said everything he could reasonably say to the king, who had assured his confessor that he loved the queen, but after having duly considered the matter, he had come to the determination not to injure his health by a precipitation little in accord with his age. The Nuncio related how he had communicated the above facts to the Spanish ambassador, who appeared to be somewhat consoled, merely remarking that King Philip his master was dying to have grandchildren by the queen, his daughter, whom he loved tenderly.

On the 9th May the Nuncio wrote that the Duke of Monteleone had confided to him that matters had taken a turn for the better. "Of a truth," he added, "one perceives more lively marks of affection on the part of the king, and both show symptoms of tenderness. The queen especially appears to be deeply in love with the king, and does all she can to make herself look as attractive as possible, but bashfulness restrains her. . . ."

During this time the Court was not free from intrigue and squabbles. If the Spanish party condemned the conduct of the king, there was a French party which approved of it, fearing that once Louis XIII. captivated by the charms of his wife, Spanish influence would reign supreme. As a general rule, the king was exceedingly kind and attentive to the queen, but on one occasion the Nuncio reports a tiff, during which his Majesty remained three days with-

out seeing his wife. Louis XIII. had always allowed his antipathy for the Spaniards to be seen, at the same time expressing his admiration for Spanish ladies. Suddenly, however, he conceived a violent aversion to the Spanish ladies attached to the queen, more especially to the Countess de la Torre and to "the widows who were dressed like nuns." The Nuncio reported that the countess despoiled her Majesty in the most terrible way, and that he was very much alarmed lest the matter should assume serious proportions; he had not dared to speak to the Spanish ambassador on so delicate a subject.

The Duke of Monteleone became very soon acquainted with the position of affairs, and did what he could to smooth matters over, but the king would hear of nothing but the departure of all the Spanish ladies; and, in fact, they were obliged to leave France on very short notice—they were bundled out of the country just as Charles I. afterwards bundled the French ladies out of England. They received presents and gratifications, and Louis XIII. went so far as to give them a letter of recommendation to his father-in-law, the King of Spain!

The Duke of Monteleone, who was about to leave Paris, before setting out for Spain implored Father Arnoux to assure him that the marriage would be consummated before he departed. The Nuncio duly reported that the confessor had held out great hopes to the ambassador, but could not do violence to the nature of the king. He very much feared, he added,

that poor Monteleone would return to Madrid with nothing better than hopes.

The duke left France, in fact, without obtaining the satisfaction he desired, and was succeeded by a far more stately grandee, Don Fernando de Gyron. His first business was to complain of the treatment of the Spanish ladies-in-waiting, who had not yet left Paris, and the Duc de Luynes appears to have made matters pleasant by assuring him that as soon as they had gone the marriage would be consummated.

It may be remarked that the Court of Spain took very little notice of this expulsion. It seems to have been well known at Madrid that the conduct of the victims had left much to be desired, and that they had done the queen more harm than good.

We must mention that two marriages took place at this epoch—that of the sister of Louis XIII., the Princesse Christine, with the Prince of Piedmont, and that of Mlle. Vendôme with the Duc d'Elbœuf. Up to this time the Nuncio had not personally interfered in the matter of the king's marriage, having left the subject in the hands of his Majesty's confessor. He now determined to alter his tactics. On the 16th January, 1619, he wrote to the Cardinal Scipio Borghese, saying—

“It was considered certain that the marriage would have been consummated after the departure of the Spanish ladies, as I told you before, adding that De Luynes had given positive assurances to the Spanish ambassador on this subject. Now that affairs do not appear to be any further advanced as regards this *congiungi-*



THE DUC DE LUYNES CARRIES LOUIS XIII. TO BED.

mento, the ambassador has begun to renew his complaints. I do not fail to offer my 'good offices,' and my private opinion is that things will not be much longer delayed. Yesterday, during an audience with his Majesty, addressing the king on the subject of the marriage of his sister, I said to him, 'Sire, I do not think that you would like to undergo the shame of your sister having a son before your Majesty has a dauphin.' The king blushed a little,—sign of bashfulness,—and replied that really he did not count upon experiencing this shame. Besides, his Majesty treats the queen very kindly, pays her all kinds of attentions, and shows that her company gives him pleasure."

The audience above alluded to took place on the 15th January. On the 19th the marriage contract between the Duc d'Elbœuf and Mlle. de Vendôme¹ was signed, and on the next day the marriage took place. Hérouard, in his journal, says—"The 20th, Sunday.—The king went to the chapel of the tower where Mademoiselle de Vendôme married the Duc d'Elbœuf. After supper he went first to see the queen, and then to the house of Mademoiselle de Vendôme *pour lui faire la guerre*."

"The 25th, Friday.—Went to bed. Prayed to God. About eleven o'clock, without expecting it, M. de Luynes came to persuade him to sleep with the queen. He resisted 'strong and firm,' struggling even to tears; is carried there, put to bed. . . . At 2 a.m. comes back, undressed, put to bed, falls asleep until nine o'clock."

There was great joy at the Louvre when this event became known. The king himself, we are told, wishing to confirm the news, despatched his master of

¹ The daughter of Henri IV. and La Belle Gabrielle.

the ceremonies, M. de Boueuil, to announce what had happened to the Nuncio, and the Spanish ambassador, and Cardinal Guido Bentivoglio, at once wrote off, saying—"The king has at last made up his mind to *congungersi colla Regina*, to the great satisfaction of their Majesties and the no less delight of the Court, because by this event the marriage is definitively established, and one may expect that much good will result to France and to all Christendom. . . ."

Then it is said that the king and the queen continued to live as husband and wife, and that in consideration of the health of his Majesty it was thought best that he should see the queen only at intervals. The Nuncio went on to observe—

"The success of the definitive union of the king and the queen is a matter of great importance for reasons which your Illustrious Lordship will justly appreciate, for the Huguenots and other evil-minded persons have been stunned by it. Your Lordship knows the different services which I have rendered in this matter. I recently renewed my efforts with Father Arnoux and Cardinal de Retz, and I even spoke to the king in a jocular fashion. I have nevertheless learned that my words, though spoken in fun, did good service; they made the king perceive that it was no longer possible to differ. . . . All the other services which I have rendered have been no less fortunate, and really Father Arnoux has behaved with great efficacy with the king and De Luynes. And as the words which I spoke to his

Majesty have been spread abroad, the Holy Father has reaped great honour, as it is a mark of the consideration in which the counsels of his ambassadors are held. I have learned also that the Huguenots and other authors of wicked projects are greatly mortified. In fact, the delay was simply due to the bashfulness of the king. . . .”

The cardinal then enters into details which can hardly be considered fit for publication, adding—“Yesterday at my audience I teased their Majesties a little on this subject, and they did not take it ill. I afterwards assured them seriously of the great pleasure which his Holiness would experience on learning the completion of this marriage, and that thanks would be offered up to the Almighty.”

Cardinal Scipio Borghese replied on the 21st Feb., highly approving of what the Nuncio had said to Louis XIII. on the subject of the shame he would feel should his sister Christine have a son before the birth of a dauphin. Cardinal Bentivoglio's trait also met with the approval of the Pontiff.

Naturally Rome and Madrid were not the only courts which received official intelligence of the event of the day. M. Armand Baschet makes due note of this, and even ventures to publish the despatch in which Angelo Contarini, the Venetian ambassador, on the 27th January, 1619, described to the Doge all that took place on the occasion. He also explained what happened when Mlle. de Vendôme married the Duc d'Elbœuf, and when Louis XIII. went to see the

newly-married couple after supper *pour faire la guerre à Mlle. de Vendôme*.¹

¹ The fact of the consummation of the marriage was thus announced to the Doge by the Venetian ambassador—

“Vendredi notti passata, fù a '25 del corrente, questo Ré Christianissimo ha dormito et consumato il matrimonio con la Regina; il sabbato sera ha mandato a dar questa nova a Monsr. Nontio et all' Ambr. di Spagna: che infinito contento ne riceverono; e così la Maestà Sua ha adempito le promesse fatte; che doppo la partenza delle Spagnole, si sarebbe contentato di contentar la Regina.

“Il Mercordi avanti, il Duca d'Abuf dormì con la sua sposa Madamosella di Vandomo; et il Rè, buona parte di quella notte, ha voluto star presente su'l proprio letto di questi doi sposi, per vedere a consumare il matrimonio; il que più d'un volta fù re iterato, con grand' applauso e gusto particolare de Rè: onde si crede, que quest' essemplio habbia havuto gran forza ad eccitar la Maestà Sua a far lo stesso; a che 'anco la sorella sua naturale Madamosella di Vandomo, viene detto, l'invitasse con parole, et li dicesse: Sire, fate voi anco così con la Regina, che farete bene.

“S'intende chi il Rè (e così egli si vanta) sio stato valoroso campione in questo fatto; li medici però gli hanno proibito d'attacar la zuffa così spesso.

“Promesse grandi poi d'amore, e di fedeltà fece il Rè alla Regina in quella notte; con dirle, che sarebbe stato tutto suo; nè mai havrebbe toccato altra donna, che lei; volendo egli in ogni maniera far *des enfans*.

“Che notte giocondissima, et serenissima sia stata quella alla Regina, et molto più a' Spagnoli, non è difficile il poterselo persuadere; onde subito covrieri in Spagna et a Roma si sono espediti; et io ancora a Vostra Serenità riveretemente scrivo il successo capitato alla mia notitia, non perchè il Rè me lo habbia fatto sapere, ma perchè la nuova di già è per tutto divulgata. Faccia Dio, che ciò sia per il ben commune.

“A Monsr. di Louines (Luynes) è nata hieri sera una femina, et a Monsiù di Pisiùrs (Puysieulx) un figlio maschio; da che il Cancelliere in particolare, padre di Pisiùrs, ha sentito infinita e straordinaria consolatione.

“Non ho io mancato di mandar il mio Secretario a rallegrarsi

There was great delight at Madrid when the news became known, and we see that the poor Duke of Monteleone was very joyful that "the assurances which had been given had been followed by effect." The expulsion of the Spanish ladies was pardonable, since it had led to so happy a result. The French ambassador at the Court of Philip, the Sieur Grenelle, wrote a long despatch on this matter, and augured that God would give "our king and France a dauphin before a year. It is impossible to describe the satisfaction of his most Catholic Majesty and all this Court. . . ."

From the marriages which were to have united France and Spain in the bonds of amity we may return to England, and see what passed between James I., Marie de Medicis, and the King of Spain at the same epoch.

per mio nome con questi Sigri. ; e Monsiù di Pisiùrs gli ha detto que mi dia questa buona nuova della copula del Rè con la Regina ; che è stata della buona ; per consolar tutto il mondo, che queste furono le proprie parole appunto di questo Ministro, &c.

"ANZELO CONTARINI.

"*Parigi li 27 Gennaro, 1619.*"

CHAPTER XV.

HENRIETTA AND CHARLES.

GUIZOT, in his *Projet de Mariage Royal*, says that James I. had no sooner ascended the throne than the question of a French or a Spanish marriage was debated in London, Paris, and Madrid, and that the two negotiations were secretly carried on until the death of Henri IV. produced a crisis, and obliged the irresolute James to come to a decision on the subject. In London it was first proposed that the dauphin (afterwards Louis XIII.) should marry Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of King James, and that the Prince of Wales should marry Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Henri IV. Sully relates that he was sent over to England to sound James upon this matter, and that he dined with his Majesty at Greenwich, and found him delighted with the proposed alliance. In his instructions Sully was to insist that this scheme for a double marriage was to remain secret until both monarchs were ready to go to war with Spain.¹ Of the dinner with King James, Sully says—"After having asked for some wine, in which he never puts

¹ *Economies Royales*—Petitot, t. iv. p. 279.

any water, the king began by saying that he wished to drink to your health, which was done reciprocally by him and me, without forgetting the queens, your wives, and your mutual children, speaking of whom he whispered to me that he was going to drink to the double alliance about to be made, at which I was astonished, as this was the only time he seemed to think of it. . . I told him that your Majesty, being importuned by Spain for the dauphin, would know how to choose well, and to make a difference between the alliance of a good brother and assured friend, with whom he would never have cause to quarrel, and one from whom, up to the present time, he had received nothing but insults. Then he told me that it was the same with him, the Spaniards having asked for his son, and that they offered this Infanta to every one merely to take advantage of princes.”¹

And Sully informed his master that he had much pleasure in conversing with King James, who knew a great deal about all sorts of sciences, and who spoke well. But Sully found that he “spoke different languages, with the view of not revealing his chief design.” Sully, in fact, knew that King James was waiting to see what the King of Spain, whose ambassadors were on their way to London, would offer. Henri IV. replied to Sully—“I must tell you that the King of England has been depicted to me as a prince so irresolute, timid, and dissimulating, that I much fear that no effects will follow the promises

¹ Sully to Henri IV., 6th July, 1603.

and hopes he has given, and that we shall remain uncertain as to his intentions, and what we may depend upon for the defence of the common cause."

Such was the opinion formed by Henri IV. of the first of the Stuarts, dubbed by him on another occasion, the wisest fool in Christendom. Before leaving England in July, 1603, Sully got James to sign a defensive treaty with France, which might become offensive if necessary.

A few months later came ambassadors from Spain—the Count of Villa Mediana and Don Alonzo of Velasco, Duke of Frias and Constable of Castile. On the 18th August, 1624, these ambassadors signed a treaty with King James, which not only re-established peace between the two kingdoms, "but opened up other perspectives," as would appear from a note drawn up by a certain Jesuit father for Philip III., in which the marriage question was fully discussed.¹ According to the Jesuit father the king and the Scotch leaned to the side of France, in consequence of the friendship which had formerly existed between that country and Scotland, and also because the king thought that he would be able to obtain easier terms as regards religion. On the other hand, the queen and the majority of the council and of the nation, heretics as well as Catholics, desired, although for different motives, that the prince should marry a Spanish princess—the heretics, lest the French and the Scotch should unite against England; the

¹ *Archives of Simancas.*

Catholics in the hope, not only that persecution would cease, but that in the long run the whole of England, and all the countries depending upon her, would be won over to the true faith.

After leaving England the Constable of Castile paid a visit to Henri IV., and proposed a double marriage between France and Spain. The king asked Sully's advice, and Sully said that "something might be done if the Spaniards in matters of honour had become white as angels, and had not remained as sunburnt as all the devils in perfidy." Sully saw through the real designs of the Spaniards, and refused to listen to their proposals. "Both Henri IV. and his minister," remarks Guizot, "were too firm and too high-minded to seek at the same time the English and the Spanish alliance, and to embrace at once two causes opposed to each other."

The Jesuit father erred in supposing that James, at least at first, leaned towards the French alliance. The alliance with Spain in 1604 was far more brilliant and tempting; the Infant, who afterwards reigned as Philip IV., had not been born, and the Infanta Anne was therefore heiress to the crown. But it was another matter when he came to enter into details, and when the constable informed him that his master would consent to the match only on the condition of the Prince of Wales being sent to Spain to be educated as a Catholic. With all his leaning towards Rome in purely spiritual matters, this was more than James could stand.

In 1605 the question of a matrimonial alliance with Spain was again raised, but it was never seriously entertained on the part of Spain, and it was soon abandoned. Matters then remained in abeyance for several years, but when Henri IV. was assassinated King James saw with alarm the speedy change operated in the foreign policy of France, and the friendship established between the courts of Paris and Madrid. It was clear that under the Regency of Marie de Medicis there was to be a complete reversal of the policy of Henri IV. Under these circumstances, and in consequence of insidious hopes held out by Spain, King James despatched Sir John Digby to Madrid, with orders to re-open the negotiations commenced in 1604, and at his first audience to demand from Philip III. the hand of his eldest daughter, the Infanta Anne. Sir John arrived in Madrid in June, 1611, and was astonished to find the Spanish Government by no means anxious for the match, the fact being, that two months previously the preliminaries for the double match with France had been signed. He, however, obeyed his instructions, and we find that the Spanish king was much perplexed, and referred the ambassador to the Duke of Lerma, who in his turn found no better way to escape from a difficulty than to refer Sir John to the Pope, without whose sanction, he said, his master could not stir in the matter. Sir John having remonstrated, was at last promised an answer of a nature to satisfy the honour and desire of the King of England. After

waiting for six weeks the British ambassador had another audience with Philip, who again referred him to his minister, and the Duke of Lerma, after much circumlocution, was obliged to acknowledge that the Infanta Anne had been promised to the dauphin. He added that his master had two other daughters to whom he was deeply attached—Maria and Margaret, the eldest being then five years of age,—and that Philip would give either of them to Henry, Prince of Wales. Sir John, without returning any answer to this offer, expressed his astonishment that the Spanish ambassador in London should have never mentioned the engagement of the Infanta Anne, but should have constantly encouraged James to demand her hand. The Duke of Lerma, after vainly trying to excuse the ambassador, then censured his conduct, and ended by throwing the blame on the hesitations of the English king. Sir John and the duke quitted each other in high dudgeon, and the former wrote to his court that he could only compare *these Spaniards* to the state of the weather—"We have two days of extreme heat, and then a number of days of excessive cold."

In February, 1612, the duke ventured to ask Sir John if he had received any reply from his court. Sir John replied that the Prince of Wales had already arrived at the age of manhood, and that the Infanta Marie was only six years old, and that James was anxious for prompt and numerous descendants. A short time afterwards James instructed his ambassador

to ask the meaning of the phrase, always reported when a marriage was spoken of—"Provided that the religious question can be arranged." Two months afterwards the duke, having had time to consult with the Pope, returned an answer to the effect, that to obtain the hand of the Infanta Maria the Prince of Wales would have to turn Roman Catholic. Sir John at once indignantly declared that his master would never listen to such a condition, even if the princess offered were the sole heiress to the universal monarchy.

Rushworth mentions the conclusion of a treaty for the union of Prince Henry with the Infanta Maria, which was all sham on the part of Spain. He adds that when Lord Salisbury drove matters to a point the Duke of Lerma denied the existence of this treaty; but the Spanish ambassador, to clear his own honour, produced his instructions written in the duke's own hand.¹

In the spring of 1612 we find the Duc de Bouillon in England, suggesting to King James the advisability of entering into a close alliance with France. He even hinted that it was not impossible that the double marriage arranged between Spain and France might come to nothing, in which case the regent would gladly bestow the hand of her eldest daughter on the Prince of Wales. If, however, Louis XIII. married the Infanta Anne, and Philip married the Princess Elizabeth of France, then the Prince of Wales would have no difficulty in obtaining the hand of the Princess

¹ Tome i. p. 1.

Christine.¹ James on making inquiries found that Bouillon had no authority to hold out hopes of the elder princess, and at first he was not inclined to treat the question of a marriage with the Princess Christine, who was only in her seventh year. However, the fact of such an overture coming from France showed that the regent was not disposed to place herself unreservedly in the hands of Spain, and this reflection caused James to change his mind. He consequently ordered Edmondès, his ambassador in Paris, to discuss the matter in an unofficial manner with the French minister, Villeroy, and to sound him as to the conditions upon which the match could be concluded. Edmondès obeyed his instructions and proposed the marriage, expressing the hope that in the event of it being agreed to, the regent would allow her daughter to be educated in England, where she might no doubt be induced to adopt the religion of her husband. After a little pressure Marie de Medicis consented to the proposed conditions.

According to Winwood, the voyage of Bouillon was delayed by a curious incident. He was to return the Order of the Garter worn by Henri IV., but it could nowhere be found, and a new one had to be made. However, the most important duty which Bouillon had to perform was to try and allay the anger which had been kindled in the breast of King James by the double marriages.

¹ The second daughter of Henri IV. and Marie de Medicis, born in 1606.

When negotiations for the hand of the Princess Christine had reached a satisfactory point, Prince Henry was asked for his opinion on the subject. He was decidedly lukewarm. He was of a military turn of mind, and was little versed in love-making and politics. On the question of religion he, however, expressed himself firmly. If in course of time he was to marry the Princess Christine, he desired that she might be sent over at the expiration of a year, so that there might be a reasonable prospect of her conversion; he said that two religions should never lie in his bed. In fact, he doubted a conversion, and his desire was to go to Germany and to select a wife for himself.

We may note here that Raleigh was strongly in favour of the French match, preferring it even to a Protestant alliance for reasons of state which he set forth in a pamphlet. Alas, while these negotiations were going on, without much chance of success, Prince Henry, on the 6th November, 1612, to the intense grief of the nation, died. So severely was his loss felt that many persons attributed his death to poison, and even King James himself was suspected of having participated in the crime. There was of course nothing to justify this terrible suspicion. However, nine days after the death of Prince Henry fresh negotiations were opened up with France, and Sir Thomas Edmondes, the English ambassador in Paris, received instructions to demand the hand of the Princess Christine for Prince Charles. All the

conditions were promptly discussed—the amount of the dowry, the date of the nuptials, and the religious question; and in 1613 the negotiations were so far advanced that the match was considered as good as concluded. However, when Sir Thomas Edmondes came to ask Villeroi for a definite answer, difficulties were raised, and before long it became apparent that both Marie de Medicis and the States-General had another alliance in view.

On the 14th June, 1614, the King of Spain wrote the following note—

“In the year 1611 the English ambassador who came here spoke of a marriage between the Infanta Doña Anna and the Prince of Wales. An answer was given to him that the negotiation with France was far advanced. . . . Nothing more was said of the affair. Now Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña¹ writes to me from London that it would be well not to let the King of England lose all hope, and that therefore negotiations for the marriage of the Prince of Wales with my daughter Doña Maria should be actively carried on, her age leaving us sufficient time to consider what it will be best to do before coming to a definite conclusion.”

The document goes on to show that his Majesty considered this affair as of much importance in consequence of the great good or great evil which would result to the Catholic religion in England. He was therefore determined before venturing any further to place the matter in the hands of the Pope.

On the 14th July the Spanish ambassador at Rome reported that he had laid the matter before the Pope, who said he had a great aversion to the negotiation in question; he did not, however, give

¹ Better known to us as Count Gondomar.

any definite reply, but said that he would seek inspiration from on high. His Holiness promised to keep the matter secret. We may note, that one of the chief objections which the Pope had to this marriage was that the law of divorce existed in England, and could be put in practice when a king's wife had no children.

Then followed a series of political and religious consultations and hesitations, which revealed the incapacity and weakness into which the Spanish Government had fallen in the hands of Philip III.; deliberations on the part of theologians presided over by the Archbishop of Toledo, the king's confessor, of monks of high repute, diplomatists, &c. Opinion was, as a general rule, favourable to the English marriage, but it was impossible to come to any decision, and King James could get no answer one way or the other. In the meanwhile the Infanta Anne was married to Louis XIII.

Naturally during the negotiations with France Gondomar was not idle, and in his efforts to thwart the match he was aided by the queen, her intimate friends, the Earl of Somerset, and other persons of influence. King James began to waver. He went so far as to ask Gondomar if, in the event of renewing negotiations with Spain, the conditions of a marriage would be so modified as to render his consent possible.

At this moment, however, James learned with delight that the celebrated work of the Jesuit father, Francisco Suarez—*Defensio Catholicæ Fidei contra*

Anglicanæ Sectæ Errores—had been publicly burned by the common executioner in Paris, as it had been burned in London. This work, written by the order of Paul V., had attacked the favourite dogma of James in the matter of the oath of allegiance, and its condemnation by the French Court was a source of infinite satisfaction to him. He marked his satisfaction by sending Sir Thomas Edmondes back to his post with instructions to offer counter-propositions. But all was vain, his ambassador could obtain no satisfactory answer; and in May, 1615, James was reluctantly obliged to admit that the last reply of Marie de Medicis was equivalent to a refusal.

There was nothing to be done but to turn once more to Spain. James now for the first time seems to have had the Spanish proposals laid before him in writing. He found them very terrible, and sent to Gondomar requesting that they might be modified. He said that he had given orders for the marriage treaty with France to be broken off, and that if Gondomar received a commission from the King of Spain to treat the affair, he would give a similar commission to the Earl of Somerset. In the month of December James once more sent to Gondomar to say that, although the negotiations had been interrupted, owing to Somerset's disgrace, he was resolved to proceed.

In 1616 Sir John Digby returned from Madrid, and at an audience with the king gave his Majesty an account of Somerset's dealings with Spain, and several details respecting the Spanish Court, which

must have sadly perplexed the royal mind. He assured his master that Philip could not give his daughter away without the consent of the Pope; and what chance had James after the Suarez business of obtaining that consent? Spain was, and perhaps is still, what was called in France a *pays soumis*—always ready to bow to the decisions of the Pontiff. It was not likely that Philip III. would depart from this line of conduct, even to prevent a rather improbable alliance between France and England. Sir John Digby did what he could to persuade King James to renounce the Spanish match, and to seek a wife for Charles in Germany. His Majesty had no idea of abandoning his favourite project, but at the same time he was so pleased with the frankness and sagacity of his young ambassador, that he not only made him a member of his Privy Council, but appointed him Vice-Chamberlain, in order that he might approach the royal person with facility.

In the month of April King James appears to have announced to his Council that the French match had been broken off, and to have explained his reasons for taking this step. He first of all determined, however, to put Marie de Medicis to the test, or rather to force her to show her hand. For this reason it was decided to send Lord Hay on a mission to Paris. Lord Hay was a Scotchman who had formerly served in France, and he was sure to be well received. But there was no money in the Exchequer, and to raise a sufficient sum James was obliged to resort to the sale of titles.

Sir John Roper paid him £10,000 to be created Baron Teynham, and Sir John Holles a like amount to be created Baron Houghton. Half this sum was given to Lord Hay.

A good deal of obscurity reigns as to the real object of this mission. According to Gardiner,¹ Lord Hay was to make three demands—that if the Princess Christine died without children, the dowry should not be returned; that the marriage ceremony should be performed according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church in France, and in England according to the rites of the Protestant Church; that the Princess Christine should not be called upon to renounce her claims on Navarre and Bearn. And then we are told that both Lord Hay and Sir Thomas Edmondes were well aware that James only wanted an excuse for breaking off with France, but wished the rupture to come from the other side.

Guizot and other French writers have put a different construction on the affair. Some say that Lord Hay arrived in Paris, ostensibly to congratulate Louis XIII. on his marriage, but in reality to press for the hand of the Princess Christine, King James being desirous to neutralize the effect of the double union with Spain. Others say that the real object of the mission was to force Spain to come to a speedy settlement. We are also told that it was felt in France that some concession should be made to the Protestant party, and that an English alliance would

¹ Tome ii. p. 391.

counterbalance the ill effects of that with Spain. The consequence was that the British ambassador was received in the French capital with royal honours. The king sent the Prince de Joinville out to St. Denis to meet him; he dined there in company with *force noblesse*, and made his entry into Paris at 7 p.m., 1st August, in this order. Four French trumpeters, a number of French nobles, English gentlemen between French gentlemen, the six trumpeters of the ambassador with caps of violet-coloured velvet, with yellow silk tassels. The sound of the trumpets, we are told, caused great delight. Next came English nobles of quality between two French nobles, the footmen with velvet cloaks, all marching in capital order; then the ambassador, magnificently and very richly attired, riding on horseback, horse shod with silver, and losing his shoes, for which the people scrambled. He was escorted by the Prince de Joinville, followed by a number of French and English gentlemen. The carriages were drawn by six horses. The king, wishing to see the ambassador pass without being himself seen, occupied a window near St. Germain l'Auxerrois.

The King of Spain, when he heard of the proposed marriage between the Prince of Wales and the Princess Christine, reproached his ambassador with not having informed him sooner of this matter, upon which the ambassador replied—"I have written on four different occasions to your Majesty that this marriage is not concluded, but is being discussed.

Nothing more has yet been done." He went on to say that he had been ill for four months, and had lately received the extreme unction; that he thought the marriage would be settled; that the English were endeavouring to improve their relations with the French Government; and that there was great excitement among the Huguenot assemblies, which had been stirred up by the doctor of the King of England, —one Turquet by name, if we mistake not.

Lord Hay, before making his formal demand for the Princess Christine, was to inquire into the state of parties to learn if peace had been made between the Court and the princes of the blood, and to see if concord had really been re-established in the country. He found discord everywhere, and in the audiences he obtained made no demand for the hand of the king's sister. The British ambassador found Condé all powerful, and it is said that it was at a banquet given by the prince to Lord Hay that the treasonable cry of *Barre-à-bas*, or down with the bar, which alone distinguished the arms of Condé from those of the king, was first uttered. Shortly after this Condé was arrested and thrown into the Bastille; the other disaffected princes left Paris, and the country was on the verge of another civil war.

We must here note a remarkable event, to wit, the entry of Cardinal Richelieu into the ministry on the 30th November, 1616. The Spanish ambassador, the Duke of Monteleone, was delighted, and thus expressed his satisfaction in a letter which he wrote to

Madrid—"There is no better man in France for the service of God, of the crown of Spain, and of the public weal." Now Henri Martin says of Richelieu in his history,¹ that he was anti-Spanish; that in 1614, at the meeting of the States-General, he was the man of the clergy, but that in 1616 he was the man of France. And on assuming office, one of the first things he did was to assure the Protestant powers that the Spanish marriages would not induce the king to embrace either the interests of Rome or those of Spain, to the prejudice of ancient alliances, "that is to say, with those who profess the so-called reformed religion in France, or with those who, hating Spain, pride themselves on being good Frenchmen. . . The king wishes to treat his subjects equally, no matter what their religion. No Catholic is so blind as to prefer a Spaniard to a French Huguenot. . . ." The satisfaction of the Duke de Monteleone was premature.

The negotiations for the marriage of a French princess with the Prince of Wales were not then continued; but that, adds Henri Martin, was not the fault of Richelieu. In fact, the cardinal already contemplated undoing the mischief which he clearly comprehended would arise from the Spanish alliance, and was preparing to enter on that struggle which formed the basis of his whole ulterior policy abroad.

One of the objects which James is presumed to have had in view in sending Lord Hay to Paris was attained, for no sooner was the Duke of Lerma aware

¹ Tome xi. p. 106.

of what was going on, than fresh overtures were made to James. The Spanish ministers had no intention of quarrelling with the King of England, and throwing him into the arms of France. Gondomar, in consequence, received instructions to re-open negotiations with James, and he set about his task in his usual able manner. Not only was his expenditure lavish, but he went so far as to address James in bad Latin, in order to afford that pedant the pleasure of correcting him. Before listening to Gondomar, however, King James consulted a committee of his Privy Council, composed of Bacon, Digby, Villiers, Wotton, Lennox, &c. The committee was asked if it considered Spain sufficiently in earnest to justify the king proceeding with the treaty. The reply was that there was a fair prospect of success, but that it might fail on the point of religion, in which case failure would redound to the honour of his Majesty at home and abroad. Digby was sent back to Madrid, and Sarmiento, as a reward for his exertions, was created Count Gondomar. What King James insisted upon was that the dowry of the Infanta should not be less than £500,000, and that it should not revert to the Infanta should she be left a widow. What King Philip wanted was that both James and Charles should promise to use neither force nor persuasion to obtain the conversion of the Infanta; that the marriage treaty should be confirmed by Act of Parliament; that a large Catholic chapel should be erected in London, which should be open, not only to the

household of the Infanta, but to every one; that insults to Catholics should be punished; that priests should be amply protected; that they should be allowed to walk about the streets in their ecclesiastical garb; and that no money should be paid until these stipulations had been carried out. Gondomar, we find, had at first some hopes of converting Charles, but he was soon obliged to report that there was no chance of the prince turning Catholic; that he had been badly brought up, and was a confirmed heretic; and yet he declared that he would sooner trust Charles than James.

Upon the above-named basis negotiations were re-opened. Spain would make no difficulty about the dowry, which was to be £600,000. The theologians wanted to impose several additional clauses on England—that any number of Catholic churches should be opened, and that Catholic professors should be allowed to teach in the universities. James, on his side, insisted that he had no power to revoke the penal laws against the Catholics. However, there seemed to be a fair prospect of success, and matters were apparently going on in a satisfactory manner, when the Bohemians revolted against the intolerance of the Imperial Government. This revolt threatened to set the whole continent in a blaze; it involved the Protestant and Catholic princes of Germany in deadly strife, and threatened to draw both England and Spain into the conflict. The German Catholics and Protestants were soon in arms and engaged in active hostilities. What was Spain to do? Her exchequer

was in a most deplorable condition, thanks to the rapacity of the Spanish courtiers, to a general system of corruption, and to bribery carried on upon an extensive scale abroad. Both the religious feelings and the sympathies of Philip were naturally on the side of the emperor, but Spain was not, financially speaking, in condition to maintain a large army in Flanders and on the Rhine, and at the same time to engage in a naval war with England. What was to be done? England must be conciliated and kept out of the struggle. Sir Francis Cottington, who at this moment was acting as ambassador at Madrid in the absence of Digby, was asked to inform James that his mediation in Germany would be accepted by Philip, and Lafuente, Gondomar's confessor (Gondomar himself being at home), was despatched to London both to persuade James to offer his mediation, and to say that his master was quite prepared to go on with the marriage treaty.

King James was delighted with the proposals of Lafuente, as may be readily supposed. In a letter to Philip, his ambassador said at his first audience James was in such good-humour, and so anxious to see the marriage accomplished, that he was not ashamed to season his conversation with indecent jests. He promised to mediate in Germany, and he would have adopted bolder measures but for the enmity which reigned between Calvinists and Lutherans—an enmity which it is supposed that James might have allayed had he thrown his sword into the scale, as he was

implored to do by the Protestant party in England. James, however, had no stomach for the fight. All he could do was to send his son-in-law a few thousand men. But what a good stroke of diplomacy it would be if he could now procure the hand of the Infanta Maria for Charles, and persuade Philip to break with the House of Austria, and to set up his dethroned son-in-law once more. The attempt to induce the King of Spain to desert the Catholic League, to join the Angelic Union, to declare war with the Emperor Ferdinand II., and to re-establish a Protestant monarch in Germany ought to have appeared hopeless. But James at once despatched Digby (now Lord Digby of Sherbourne) and Sir Walter Aston to Madrid to effect these objects, instructing his ambassadors at the same time, with his usual caution, on no account to get him into trouble or to compromise the peace of Europe. War James dreaded above all things. Gondomar at once announced to his Court the approaching arrival of Lord Digby and Sir Walter, who soon afterwards reached Madrid, armed, it was said, not with carnal but with spiritual weapons. Father Frederico and Father Francisco, two Spanish monks, had in fact given it as their opinion that there was no objection to the proposed marriage between the Prince of Wales and the Infanta, and it was with this instrument that the English ambassadors approached his Spanish Majesty. Philip was greatly perplexed; more lay and ecclesiastical councils were summoned, and their deliberations were referred to Paul V. All

this took time, especially as Lord Digby and Count Gondomar had frequently to travel backwards and forwards between London and Madrid in search of further instructions from their respective courts.

Everything was done by King James to propitiate Spain. He not only disregarded the feeling of the nation, which was entirely opposed to the Spanish alliance, and quarrelled with France, but he sent Sir Walter Raleigh to the scaffold. As Gondomar said, the King of Spain could not expect less than this from the friendship of James.¹

The sacrifice of Sir Walter Raleigh was perhaps the worst act committed by James, and it was committed in vain. Hume has censured it in the severest manner, and what he wrote deserves attention for more than one reason. He said—"To sacrifice to a concealed enemy of England the life of the only man in the nation who had a high reputation for valour and military experience was regarded as meanness and indiscretion." And the intimate connection into which the king was now entering with Spain being universally distasteful to the nation, rendered this proof of his complaisance still more odious and unpopular."² As a further proof of his sincerity, James had the Popish recusants released from prison, to the great dismay and irritation of the people.

The bait offered to James was certainly tempting. The dowry of the Infanta was to be two million pieces of eight, equal to £600,000, a sum nearly as large,

¹ Guizot, p. 66, *Archives of Simancas*.

² Tome vi. p. 39.

says Rushworth, as all the money granted to the king by the Parliament during the whole course of his reign. Every attempt to induce James to break with Spain was unavailing. At this moment Gondomar was asked for his opinion as to the resources of England. He reported that the country was very rich; that in a few weeks it could fit out a powerful fleet and cover the ocean with privateers, and that a war might be attended with awful disasters both to the Church and the monarchy.

The year 1619 was fruitful in events. In January King James learned that his dear friends the Spaniards were arming to take the sea, and that from Cadiz to Barcelona their dockyards were busy. Cottington was assured that this fleet was being prepared in order to attack Algiers, but in England it was soon understood that the real object of Spain was to seize upon Venice as a basis of operations against Bohemia. The very idea of such a violation of public law kindled the wrath of James, and roused him into activity for the moment. Cottington was at once instructed to demand explanations, and in the mean time six ships of the royal navy were ordered for immediate service, more vessels were to be equipped by the merchants, ship-money to be levied, train bands and all the beacons along the coast to be inspected.

This energetic action at once had the desired effect. The naval armaments of Spain were suspended, and no more was heard of Algiers and pirates. It is supposed that the vigorous policy adopted by James

in this instance had some connection with his pet matrimonial scheme;¹ that he was annoyed with the little interest which Spain had shown on the subject. For some time he had been complaining that Philip had taken no steps to discover whether the Pope was satisfied with his concessions, and if the dispensation was forthcoming. Before the end of the month a courier arrived from Berlin to say that an agent had been despatched to Rome to ask for the dispensation, and the consequence was that King James determined to send Viscount Doncaster (who as Lord Hay had broken off the French marriage treaty in 1616) to Germany.

But the departure of Lord Doncaster was delayed by the death of the Emperor Matthias, who was succeeded by Ferdinand II. It was not until the 12th May that he set out on his errand of peace, and he had hardly arrived on the scene of action when he learned that the men and money furnished for the war in Bohemia came from Spain! The Spanish ambassador, Oñate, told him that mediation was out of the question, and that if the Bohemians did not submit, the sword would have to decide the quarrel. And it was the master of Oñate who had lured James into playing the part of mediator. On the Bohemian side the mediation of King James met with no better success. What the Bohemians wanted were men and money, and not an ambassador. Under the circumstances Lord Doncaster thought that the best thing

¹ *Gardiner*, t. iii. p. 289.

he could do would be to go to Spa to drink the waters and wait for further orders.

On the 16th August, 1619, the Bohemian Estates, rejecting the election of the Emperor Ferdinand, set up the Elector Palatine as King of Bohemia, and after some little hesitation the son-in-law of King James rashly accepted the crown, and thus added another thorn to that of the would-be mediator or *Peace-maker*.

Every possible effort was made at this time to persuade the English monarch to renounce his idea of a matrimonial alliance with Spain. The Duke of Savoy offered him his daughter; the Dutch Commissioners over in England proposed a German princess; they said that if Charles were to marry the daughter of Prince Maurice of Hesse-Cassel they would see that she had a dowry large enough to pay off the debts of her father-in-law. The Princess Christine was on the eve of being married, but James was given to understand that Louis XIII. would gladly give the hand of the Princesse Henriette to his son. On their side the adversaries of Spain at home assured him that if he would drop the Spanish match, the Parliament would grant him as large a sum as £800,000. At this juncture the queen died of dropsy. Although brought up a Protestant, she had recently turned Roman Catholic, and had been a warm partisan of the Spanish match. Spanish affairs in London were at this moment in the hands of Sanchez and Lafuente, the former Gondomar's secretary, the latter

his confessor, and neither one or the other possessed much influence with James. In spite of all these offers, though the queen was dead, and Gondomar with his oily tongue and his thorough knowledge of how to manage the king, was away, James clung with obstinacy to the Spanish alliance. The single excuse which he had for acting as he did was that he entirely disapproved of the conduct of the Elector Palatine in accepting the crown of Bohemia; and in this matter James by no means stood alone. His opinion was shared by several of the Protestant princes of Germany. He went a step further, and humiliated himself so far as to assure the Emperor Ferdinand and King Philip that he had had nothing to do with the election of his son-in-law, and he attempted to induce him to retire from Bohemia, in which case he would persuade Philip to withdraw his troops.

In 1620 James seemed on the point of rendering all necessary aid to the Protestant cause. Sir Andrew Gray, a Scotch officer in the service of Bohemia, obtained permission to levy 1000 men in England, and a similar force in Scotland. But on the 5th March Gondomar landed at Dover. He was conducted to London in state, and the first thing he heard on entering the capital was the sound of Sir Andrew Gray's drums beating up volunteers. Gondomar had a difficult game to play, but he set about his task with his usual craft and audacity. And he had his reward. At his first audience James took him by

the hand, and assured him as a king, a gentleman, a Christian, and an honest man, that he had no wish to marry his son to any one but his master's daughter, and that he desired no alliance but that of Spain. "At these words," says Gardiner,¹ "he took off his hat as if exhausted by the effort, and wiped his heated forehead with his handkerchief."

James after this began once more to blow hot and cold. He allowed himself to be persuaded that no attack would be made on the Palatinate, and he communicated this impression to the Princes of the Union. Shortly afterwards he consented to allow those princes to levy volunteers, as long as his name was kept in the background; and then he threw obstacles in the way of a loan being raised by the King of Bohemia in the city, and afterwards he asked the aldermen to raise a voluntary fund in defence of the Palatinate. But while James was veering round to every point of the compass, while the people were vainly asking for a parliament, and while the clergy were talking about raising subscriptions to rebuild the walls of Zion, the Spanish troops were on the march. While James was allowing himself to be still further gulled by Gondomar on the subject of the marriage treaty, and was engaged in an infamous plot against the Dutch, in concert with Spain; while he was one day promising the Princes of the Union to aid them with 20,000 or 30,000 men in case they were attacked, and was lecturing them the day after; while he was

¹ Tome iii. p. 338.

declaring that if Spinola touched the Palatinate he should consider Gondomar as a man without faith and without God, the Spaniards were on the march.

The blow was not long in coming. At the end of August, Spinola, at the head of an army of 24,000 men, invaded the Palatinate. James is said to have burst into tears of impotent rage when he heard the news, and to have talked wildly of demanding Spinola's head, while he wished that that of Raleigh was again on his shoulders. He offered his unconditional support to the Union, promised to aid his son-in-law if he would renounce the crown of Bohemia, half consented to summon Parliament, and prepared to send a powerful fleet to sea, to the consternation of the Spaniards. At first Gondomar, with all his skill, could make little headway against the storm, but after a while he succeeded in calming King James, and once more dangled the marriage treaty before his eyes. In September he received a letter from Madrid written in Philip's name, containing assurances that a speedy reply would be sent to the matrimonial overtures of the King of England. This letter Gondomar was to throw in his Majesty's way. At the same time the ambassador received a private note, saying that the English proposals were altogether inadmissible ; in fact, when these letters were written, Philip was listening with a willing ear to the proposals that the Infanta should marry the emperor's eldest surviving son. The Prince of Wales might be consoled with the hand of an archduchess.

No doubt the Pope would take the blame of this change on his shoulders, or the Infanta might be told to say that she would rather go into a convent than marry a heretic.¹

It appears that Gondomar thought matters too serious for throwing the letter in the way of King James as he had been ordered, and that the only thing to be done was to despatch Lafuente at once to Rome in quest of the dispensation. This show of sincerity appeared to convince James of the good faith of the Spaniards, but for all that he at length determined to summon Parliament, which, by a proclamation dated the 6th Nov., 1620, was called upon to meet on the 16th Jan.

Long before the Parliament met another thunderbolt fell. The Prince Palatine experienced an irretrievable defeat under the walls of Prague, and was obliged to fly for his life. The news of this event caused the wildest excitement in London. Gondomar's life seems to have been threatened, and he had to apply to the Council for protection.² James, generally accused by the nation of having been the cause of this untoward event, was at first stupefied by the news, but he soon recovered his equanimity. He

¹ *Gardiner*, tom. iii. p. 377.

² Gondomar appears to have complained to the Lord Mayor, the offence having been committed in the City, but being unable to obtain redress he appealed to the king, who went to the Guildhall in person, threatened to place a garrison in the City, and to seize upon its charter. The consequence was that the apprentices who had insulted the ambassador were whipped through the streets, and one of them died under the lash.

sent £30,000 to Worms, promised to aid in the defence and recovery of the Palatinate, and summoned a council of war, which adopted the most vigorous decisions.

All this fine frenzy soon evaporated; an offer of a French alliance was rejected, and Gondomar, incomprehensible as it may seem, soon recovered his ascendancy over the royal mind.

On the 30th Jan., 1621, the Parliament met, and would have assembled on the 16th but for pressure of business caused by the arrival of Marshal Cadenet with further proposals from France, to which we intend presently to allude. The king went down to the House, and after treating it to a long disquisition on his constitutional theories, said it had been rumoured that the marriage treaty with Spain would be followed by a grant of toleration to the Catholics; but he assured his faithful commons that he would do nothing dishonourable or contrary to the interests of religion. The House accepted the assurance of the king, and in the hope that he would adopt an energetic line of policy, voted him a sum of £160,000—not for the defence of the Palatinate; that, according to the council of war, would require an army of 30,000 men, and an expenditure of £140,000 down, and £900,000 a year. The £160,000, in fact, was voted as a testimony of devotion towards the king.

“The Commons,” says Mr. Green, “answered the king’s appeal by a unanimous vote, lifting their hats as high as they could hold them, and declaring that

for the recovery of the Palatinate they would adventure their fortunes, their estates, and their lives. But all this was merely a flash in the pan. James returned to his old irresolute policy, and did nothing.

While these negotiations were still dragging on another sudden change came over the scene. In 1621 both Philip III. and Paul V. died. The first was succeeded by Philip IV., the second by Gregory XV., and it was fondly hoped by James that the new monarch and the new Pontiff would lend a more willing ear to his proposals than their predecessors. Lord Digby, who was in London at the time that this double event occurred, was at once sent back to Madrid to congratulate the new king, while George Gage was sent on a similar errand to Rome. Lord Digby was successful to a certain degree, or seemingly successful, in carrying out his instructions. Philip IV. wrote to Gregory XV., asking him to accord the necessary dispensation for the projected marriage, and wrote to Ferdinand II. in favour of the Prince Palatine. He even promised James to reinstate his son-in-law *vi et armis*, should the emperor refuse.

Everything now seemed settled, and it certainly looked as if the mischief done by the battle of Prague was about to be repaired, and as if James was going to succeed in his desperate attempt to obtain the hand of the Infanta for his son, and to set the two kindred branches of Spain and Austria by the ears, in order to re-establish the King of

Bohemia. The date of the betrothal of Charles and Maria was discussed, the dowry settled, and Lord Digby was rewarded for the success of his efforts by being created Earl of Bristol; but the papal chair stopped the way. His Holiness was always demanding further concessions for the Catholics in England. Nothing seemed to satisfy him, and until he was satisfied there was no dispensation to be had, and no marriage could take place. King James at last lost patience, blustered and threatened, and sent an ultimatum to Madrid; but all this was of no avail—James was a dupe. The fact is, as Guizot remarks, that it had long been determined at Madrid that Ferdinand II., and not the Prince of Wales, should wed the Infanta Maria, and this marriage did take place two years later.

In November, 1622, Philip IV. wrote a letter to his dear friend and minister, the Count Olivarez, in which he declared that his father never had any intention of according the hand of the Infanta to Charles. And we are told that when dying Philip III. expressed his regret to his daughter, that he should not live to see her married, but that her brother would not abandon her until she became an empress.

James showed little perspicacity in this affair. If we turn to Rushworth's *Historical Collections*, we find that in 1621 Gondomar was "reviled and assaulted in the streets of London, the people being persuaded that he was abusing the king and the State in favour of Spain." And the next year even the Earl of

Bristol must have doubted the sincerity of his Spanish friends, for he declared to James that "if they intend not the match they are falser than are the devils in hell, for deeper oaths and protestations of sincerity could not be made." This seems to us an apology inspired by doubt.

And yet King James had made great concessions. In addition to those we have already mentioned were others which were not known at the time. In 1623 there was a treaty signed between the two high contracting powers which was intended for the public eye. To this treaty James thought that Parliament would offer no insuperable objections. But he swore privately to an article to which he knew that neither Lords nor Commons would consent—an article respecting the education of any children which might be born. In the *Clarendon Papers* we find several letters bearing upon this subject—

SECRETARY CALVERT TO BRISTOL.

14th October, 1622.

"Only seven years are mentioned in the public treaty, but his Majesty will oblige himself privately in a letter to the King of Spain, that they shall be brought up *sub regimine matris* for two years longer."

That is to say, that King James consented to his grandchildren being brought up as Roman Catholics until they were nine years old. But this was evidently not considered sufficient, for on the 24th November his Majesty himself wrote to the Earl of Bristol, that he would not stick at nine years if the

King of Spain was not satisfied. On the 5th January, 1623, Secretary Calvert wrote to Mr. Gage, informing him that the king and the prince would subscribe to all the articles as sent by the Earl of Bristol. This being the case, a few months later (24th April) Mr. Gage was able to write to the king, that in a congregation held on the 22nd March, *stilo novo*, the dispensation had finally been resolved upon.

At this critical juncture another accident happened. Gregory XV. died, and was succeeded by Urban VIII., and the Papal Nuncio at Madrid refused to deliver the dispensation until it had been approved of by the new Pontiff, and the new Pontiff on his side determined to delay matters as much as possible in the hope of Charles becoming a Roman Catholic. The question of the dispensation must therefore be reconsidered.

The congregation of four cardinals, to whom the Pope submitted the affair, insisted that King James should accord complete liberty of worship to the Catholics in England. They were bent upon bringing the whole of England once more under the domination of Rome, and there was some excuse for their arrogance after what had happened in France. Gage was summoned before this ecclesiastical court to receive instructions, and as a Catholic he felt no humiliation in obeying this summons. Cardinal Bandino, addressing him on behalf of his colleagues, said that the King of England, having read many Catholic works, must be aware that the Pope could

not grant a dispensation unless some great good accrued to the Church. He added that his Majesty was too well versed in theology not to know that there was no salvation beyond the pale of the Catholic faith. Why should he not follow the example of Henri IV.? The Almighty would protect him. The matter might be kept secret. If he would pay a visit to Rome, the Pope would send a legate to Flanders to meet him. Should the king refuse conversion himself, he might allow the Prince of Wales to be saved.¹

This was what King James laid himself open to. The congregation could not accord a dispensation on the terms offered. Gage must go back to London with the articles to which the king and Charles had subscribed. He returned to England on the 25th August, and had an interview with the king. The next month James, in a letter to Bristol, "poured out his distress." He was placed in a lamentable position; even his pedantry had been turned into a weapon against him. The cardinals were evidently aware of his belief in his divine right, and thought that he could do what he liked with the Parliament and the nation.

The articles as they were returned to Gage contained several important alterations. All the Infanta's servants were of necessity to be Catholics. Her church was to be open to all who chose to enter, and not merely to her household. The priests, twenty-

¹ *Gardiner*, t. iv. p. 351.

four in number, were to be under the control of a bishop, and were to be freed from all subjection to the laws, except those which were imposed by their ecclesiastical superiors. The Infanta must have the education of her children; of the girls till the age of twelve, of the boys till the age of fourteen.

It was now asserted that everything would be speedily settled were Charles to go to Madrid to pay his court to the Infanta. A hint to this effect had long ago been thrown out by the plausible Gondomar, who was said to have declared that if Charles really wished to marry the Infanta, he would have to go to Spain. Why not imitate his great grandfather, who had gone to France in quest of a bride; his father, who had undertaken the voyage to Copenhagen; the Duc d'Anjou, who had crossed the Channel to pay his addresses to Queen Elizabeth; and Gustavus Adolphus, who had ventured to Berlin to see the Princess Eleanor?

James appears to have had some doubts as to the policy of this trip. Hume tells us that he consulted Sir Francis Cottington on the subject—an honest man who knew Spain. “Cottington,” said his Majesty, “here are baby Charles and dog Steenie, who have a great mind to go post to Madrid, and fetch home the Infanta. What think you of that?” Sir Francis raised several objections; the king threw himself on his bed and wept, swearing that he should lose baby Charles. However, after a short display of grief and resistance his Majesty yielded, the trip

to Spain was decided upon, and on the 27th February, 1623, John and Thomas Smith, under which names the prince and the duke travelled, left London in disguise for Dover, where they were joined by Sir James Cottington and Mr. Porter.

On this occasion his Majesty broke into verse. He wrote a poem on the expedition, a copy of which is preserved in the Bodleian Library—

“What sudden change hath darked of late
The glory of the Arcadian state !
The fleecy flocks refuse to feed,
The lambs to play, the ewes to breed ;
The altars smoke, the offerings burn,
Till Jack and Tom do safe return.”

The royal poet would perhaps have found it difficult to say where the lambs were to come from if the ewes did not breed. But one must not be hypercritical when a monarch condescends to write verse, and to style himself “Pan.”

We have no intention of following Charles and Buckingham through the various episodes of their voyage to Madrid and back, but a brief account of their adventurous trip is necessary to our story. The pair got safely to their journey's end, and while passing through Paris Charles got a glimpse of his future bride, Henrietta Maria, and was not much impressed with her personal attractions. As they were not expected at Madrid, they were not received with any State ceremonies.

The following letter gives an account of the arrival—

“MADRID, 10th March, 1623.¹

“ . . . The next morning we sent for Gondomar, who went presently to the Condé of Olivarez, and as speedily got your dog Steenie a private audience of the king. . . . The next day we had a private visit of the king, the queen, the Infanta, Don Carlos, and the cardinal, in sight of all the world, . . . for there was the Pope's Nuncio, the emperor's ambassador, the French, and all the streets filled with guards and other people. . . . Olivarez took me in his coach to go to the king; we found him walking in the streets, with his cloak thrown over his face, and a sword and buckler by his side; he leaped into the coach, and away he came to find the wooer in another place, where there passed much kindness and compliment one to another. You may judge by this how sensible this king is of your son's journey, and if we can either judge by outward shows or general speeches, we have reason to condemn your ambassadors for rather writing too sparingly than too much. . . .”

And this letter, signed by both Charles and Steenie, went on to relate how Olivarez had declared that if the Pope refused to grant a dispensation for a wife, they would give the Infanta to Baby as his wench; and that he had written to Cardinal Lodovicio, the Pope's nephew, that his master could refuse nothing to the King of England.

In spite of interviews with the king, with the Infanta, and with Olivarez; in spite of concessions carried to an extent that the Spanish Government seriously doubted their sincerity, it soon became clear to both the prince and the duke that their visit would end in failure. At home King James was becoming exceedingly anxious. He was afraid that Charles would be unable to stand the heat of Madrid during the summer; he dreaded lest his “sweet boys”

¹ *Hardwicke State Papers*, t. i. p. 401.

should be detained as hostages—fears started by the “sweet boys” themselves. This accounts for the concessions. On the 7th July Charles asked for an audience of the king, ostensibly to take leave, as he could no longer wait for the arrival of the Papal dispensation. At this audience he consented to agree to all the demands made by Philip, and Philip embraced him as his brother. Madrid was illuminated for three consecutive nights, and Lord Andover was despatched to England with the glad tidings.

James was very unwilling to sanction the concessions accepted by Charles, but he trembled for the safety of Baby, and summoned a Council, which, seeing the condition of the royal mind, assented to the articles. On the 20th July, 1623, the king swore to three articles at Whitehall chapel, in presence of the Spanish ambassadors Inojos and Coloma, the articles being read out by Mr. Secretary Calvert, and his Majesty solemnly declaring that he would use his utmost endeavours to induce Parliament to sanction them.

The following extracts show how uneasy James was, and to what lengths he was inclined to go—

KING JAMES TO THE PRINCE AND DUKE.

“*NEWMARKET, 15th March, 1623.*

“ . . . As to my Baby’s own business, I find by Bristol’s letter two points likely to be stucken at, that ye must labour to help by all the means ye can . . . ”

The first point related to the long delay in finishing the marriage, James being very much afraid lest

Charles should succumb to the heat of a Spanish summer. The second point concerned the dowry. He said that it was proposed to protract term for payment, "which were a base thing, and a breach of their promise made many years ago!"

KING JAMES TO PRINCE.

"17th March, 1623.

" . . . I have sent you, my Baby, two of your chaplains, Mawe and Wrenn, with all the stuff and ornaments fit for the service of God. I have fully instructed them, so as all their behaviour and service shall, I hope, prove decent and agreeable to the purity of the primitive Church, and yet as near the Roman form as can be lawfully done, for it hath ever been my way to go with the Church of Rome *usque ad aras*."

"25th March, 1623.

" . . . I know not what ye mean by my acknowledging the Pope's spiritual supremacy; I am sure you would not have me renounce my religion for all the world; . . . this may be an allusion to a passage in my book against Bellarmine, where I offered, if the Pope would quit his godhead and usurping over kings, to acknowledge him a chief bishop."

KING JAMES TO PRINCE AND DUKE.

"WHITEHALL, 21st July, 1623.

"MY SWEET BOYS,

"Even as I was going yesterday evening to the ambassadors to take my private oath, having taken the public, before noon, with great solemnity, Andover came stepping in at the door like a ghost, and delivered me your letters. . . ."

The king, after complaining of the expense of sending two fleets to Spain, one to bring home Charles, and a second to bring over the Infanta in March, added—"Let them, in God's name, send her by their own fleet," and—"Sweet Baby, go on with

the contract, and the best assurance ye can have of getting her next year; but, upon my blessing, lie not with her in Spain, except ye be sure to bring her with you, and forget not to make them to keep their former conditions anent the portion, otherwise both my Baby and I are bankrupts for ever."

The Infanta herself was strongly opposed to the idea of marrying a Protestant. Her confessor had told her that she might as well wed the evil one as a heretic, and added—"What a nice bedfellow you will have." Even when she was at last induced to consent to a marriage (if she ever did consent), the theologians declared that she would have to remain in Spain for a year after her wedding, in order to see if King James would carry out his promises; at the same time Charles was informed that he might remain with his bride. It was no doubt supposed that in the event of Charles consenting to this arrangement, his conversion would be accomplished.

Among other demands made by Olivarez in favour of English Catholics was one which raises a smile of incredulity, and which we believe was never pressed. It was that they should have several fortified towns accorded to them as places of refuge; and yet such a concession had been made to the Huguenots in France.

Charles must also have deeply felt the situation in which he had placed himself when, after vainly waiting for the Papal dispensation, Olivarez coolly showed him the letter which he had received from

Philip on the subject of the union—a letter to which we have already referred. It appears to have been couched in these terms—

“My father declared his mind at his death-bed concerning the match with England, which was, never to make it; and your uncle’s intention, according to that, was ever to delay it; and you know likewise how averse my sister is to it. I think it now time that I should find a way out of it. . .”

“This letter,” says Gardiner in a note, “is known only from an English translation. It was afterwards shown to the Prince of Wales by Olivarez; but he was not allowed to take a copy of it.”

It seems, however, that Charles on leaving Olivarez immediately wrote out the letter from memory.

When Ashton heard of this document he threw up his arms in astonishment, remembering as he did the assurances which he himself had so often received from the lips of Philip III.

James now ordered his fleet to Spain to bring home the wanderers. In the meantime the marriage contract, on the 25th July, was signed by both Charles and Philip. The Infanta was not to go to England before the spring of 1624, but the marriage could take place as soon as it was known that James had sworn to the articles, and as soon as the Papal dispensation had arrived. A few days afterwards Charles swore to observe this contract, and then prepared to take his departure, leaving behind him his proxy for the marriage.

On the 30th August the Prince of Wales and the

Duke of Buckingham, as the following letter shows, started on their road home.

PRINCE CHARLES AND THE DUKE TO KING JAMES.

“DEAR DAD AND GOSSIP,

“This day we take our leave ; to-morrow we begin our journey ; we leave our business thus. This Pope being sick (as they say here) hath not yet given power for the delivery of the dispensation, upon the capitulations agreed upon, wherefore they not being able (though many divines say to the contrary) to contract me your Baby, until that power come from Rome, and they not having used us with those realities as to encourage us to rely longer upon uncertainties, I, your Baby, have thought fit to leave my promise to the king in my lord of Bristol’s hands, to deliver it when that power comes from Rome. . . .

“*Madrid*, 29th August, 1623.”

Philip and Charles seem to have parted on good terms, the king accompanying the prince a short distance out of Madrid, and having a pillar set up to mark the spot where they took leave of each other. According to Rushworth, Charles had no sooner got safely on board ship than he declared the Spaniards to have been guilty of folly and weakness in letting him go after having treated him so badly, and that he so little expected to be allowed to leave Spain, that he was said to have written to King James to forget that he ever had a son. This will account for his subsequent conduct.

Great were the demonstrations of joy when Charles returned home without his Infanta. There was nothing but music, the firing of cannons, the blowing of trumpets, and the blazing of bonfires in London and in all the great towns. This display of enthusiasm

over the defeat of his darling project must have been rather galling to James, and at the same time have convinced him of the thorough unpopularity of the Spanish alliance.

On the 12th November the Papal dispensation at length arrived at Madrid, and it was now the turn of Spain to rejoice. At least Rushworth tells us that when the ratification came from Rome, bonfires were lighted throughout the country, and "great ordnance thundered out reports of joy." King Philip at once sent for the Earl of Bristol, and insisted that the marriage by proxy should be fixed for the 29th November. Bristol applied for instructions. He received them on the 26th. The marriage was to be prevented, the proxy was not to be delivered until the Palatinate had been restored and until Philip had agreed to pay the dowry in ready money down. As the Court of Madrid had continued raising its demands while Charles was in Spain, King James and his son now retaliated.

We shall add but a few words. The Spanish match was now virtually broken off. Bristol was recalled, for a while confined in the Tower for having misinformed the king. The Infanta Maria ceased to take lessons in English. The betrothal presents, consisting of costly jewels, were sent back, and James considered it necessary to summon another Parliament.

Mr. Green has put tersely in the *History of the English People* what followed. He says, "The king was forced to summon a Parliament and to concede

the point upon which he had broken with the last, by laying before it the whole question of the Spanish negotiations. Buckingham and the prince personally joined the Parliament in its demand for a rupture of the treaties and a declaration of war. A subsidy was eagerly voted; the persecution of the Catholics, which had long been suspended out of deference to Spanish intervention, recommenced with vigour. The head of the Spanish party in the Ministry, Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, the Lord Treasurer, was impeached on a charge of corruption and dismissed from office. James was swept along helplessly with the tide. . . . The Spanish ambassador quitted the realm; a treaty of alliance was concluded with Holland; negotiations were begun with the Lutheran princes of North Germany, who had looked coolly on at the ruin of the Calvinistic Elector Palatine; and the marriage of Charles with Henrietta, a daughter of Henri IV. of France, and sister of its king, promised a renewal of the system of Elizabeth."

The Parliament, in fact, voted that the king could not, with security to his honour or respect for the religion of the State, pursue negotiations for the marriage of the Prince of Wales with the Infanta Maria, nor rely on such negotiations for the re-establishment of the Elector Palatine. His Majesty declared that he would follow the advice of his faithful Commons and would denounce the treaties, and when this decision was known there were great demonstrations of delight both in the streets and the churches.

While the negotiations with Spain were going on, we know that the French Court did not renounce the hope of an English alliance. After Marshal d'Ancre had been assassinated and Marie de Medicis driven from the Court, the Duc de Luynes, at once the favourite and the minister of Louis XIII., proceeded to reverse the policy of the queen-mother and to return to that of Henri IV. This policy consisted in supporting the Protestants abroad against the House of Austria, and in seeking the friendship of England rather than that of Spain.

In August 1620 a somewhat obscure agent called Du Buisson was sent to England on the pretence of purchasing horses for the Prince de Condé, but really to sound the English Court on the subject of a matrimonial alliance, and was presented by the French ambassador, M. de Tillières, to King James. Du Buisson, much to the astonishment of his Majesty, had hardly been introduced when he blurted out the propositions with which he had been charged—propositions all the more strange coming at a moment when there were Spanish ambassadors in London treating for the marriage with the Infanta. The king replied that he was engaged already with Spain, but thanked the French king for the honour he did him in offering the alliance. The Comte de Tillières, when informed by King James of what had happened, disavowed Du Buisson, and rather haughtily declared that the daughters of France were not accustomed to ask for husbands; he even went so far as to assure

his Majesty that Du Buisson's liver must have been out of order when he made his demand. The Duc de Luynes naturally approved of the conduct of the Comte de Tillières, and threw over poor Du Buisson.

In spite of this little mishap, and perhaps being persuaded that the Spanish match would never come off, the Duc de Luynes, nothing daunted, returned to the charge a few months later. He had serious motives for attempting to conciliate England, for he was about to undertake a campaign against the Protestant party in France, which, in spite of the faithful observance of the edict of Nantes, under the Bouillons, the Rohans, and the Soubises, was giving fresh trouble.

In the month of December, therefore, the duke sent over, not an obscure Du Buisson, but his own brother, the Marshal de Cadenet, who disembarked at Calais on the 1st January, 1621, with a retinue of fifty gentlemen and three hundred servants. The marshal was received with great honour, and was flattered to the top of his bent, but his mission met with no greater success than that of Du Buisson. Any hopes which James held out were illusory, and were intended, as De Tillières (who spoke of his Majesty as a cunning tom-cat) soon perceived, only to advance his own affairs and to arouse the jealousy of the Spaniards. It seems that the marshal showed himself a very poor diplomatist in this affair. "What think you of the new French ambassador?" asked the king of Bacon. "He is a tall, fine-looking man,

sir," was the reply. "But what do you think of his head?" insisted the king. "Sir," answered Bacon, "tall men are often like houses four or five stories high, where the highest story is generally the worst furnished." Every time that the marshal attempted to speak of a marriage with the *Princesse Henriette*, the king said he was engaged in negotiations with Spain, and changed the conversation, and in due time the extraordinary embassy returned home, having during its sojourn in England cost this country £200 a day. On two previous occasions the ambassadors of King James had received replies similar to that which he now gave to the marshal—when he demanded the hand of the *Infanta Anne* for Prince Henry, and that of the *Princess Christine* for Prince Charles; the honour was declined owing to previous engagements.

Richelieu in his memoirs thus mentions this mission—"The Duc de Luynes sent his brother Cadenet to England to try and persuade Prince Charles to ask for the hand of the *Princesse Henriette*, so as to prevent King James from aiding the Protestants. But he was engaged to Spain." After which the cardinal piously ejaculates—"God, who makes marriages in heaven, destined other times and other persons for bringing this match about." In fact, destined Cardinal Richelieu to conclude the marriage.

The matter of the French alliance was allowed to remain dormant for nearly three years, in the course of which the Duc de Luynes died, and was succeeded by Richelieu. A considerable amount of anxiety

appears to have reigned in Paris on the subject of the Spanish match—anxiety which was diminished rather than increased when it was known that Jack and Tom Smith had gone to Madrid on their romantic expedition. It was considered in France that affairs were desperate when such a step was decided upon. When Charles and Buckingham returned from Spain negotiations were re-opened in an informal manner. The French king sent James a present of six couple of falcons, and we learn that the magnificent *cortége* which accompanied these birds entered London by torchlight, and received a hearty reception. James, highly flattered by this indirect overture on the part of Louis XIII., at once summoned his Council to deliberate what should be done. It appears that five councillors were still in favour of the Spanish match, four were neutral, and three, including Prince Charles, were opposed to it. The neutrals afterwards sided with the prince, and the consequence was that Lord Kensington was despatched to Paris to sound the king and Marie de Medicis on this important question. Spain at once endeavoured to thwart the match, both Philip and the Pope offering to make concessions. When the King of Spain learned that the British Parliament was strenuously opposed to the union with the Infanta, he declared that it little mattered what the Parliament thought, the Prince of Wales was engaged to his sister, and would not break his word.

When the French ambassador became aware that both the king and the Parliament were opposed to

the Spanish match, he wrote to his Court, saying, that he considered war between Spain and England imminent. The Earl of Carlisle, who as Lord Hay in 1616 had gone to Paris to demand the hand of the Princess Christine, was now sent back to France to demand the hand of the Princess Henrietta. He arrived in the French capital in April 1624, and had Cardinal Richelieu to deal with. Some dislike, and perhaps apprehension, filled the English mind at the idea of having to negotiate with his Eminence, but the cardinal was moderate in his demands, and acted with the celerity of a man who was in earnest, and knew what he wanted. The Spaniards had been haggling over the affair for seven years. "In less than nine moons," wrote James Howell, "the affair was terminated, whereas we might have negotiated with Spain for nine years, and have arrived at no result."

The question of the marriage was referred to Cardinal Richelieu and four commissioners, two of whom were English—the Earls of Carlisle and Holland.¹ A few difficulties arose respecting matters of etiquette—whether the cardinal should give the ambassadors his right or his left hand, and how far he should accompany them when they took leave; it became necessary to refer to London for instructions. However, so as not to waste time, it was agreed that the cardinal should feign sickness, and that the ambassadors should visit him in bed, and it was

¹ Lord Kensington had been created Earl of Holland.

under these conditions that the matrimonial alliance between two great countries was discussed.

The Court of Rome was naturally opposed to the English match, and threw obstacles in its way. Monsignor Spada, the Papal Nuncio in Paris, represented that it would hardly be honourable for France to purchase an alliance with England, on condition of reconquering the Palatinate for the son-in-law of King James, and driving out a Catholic prince. France, by the way, had no such intention. He also brought two briefs from Urban VIII., one addressed to Louis XIII., the other to Marie de Medicis. The Pontiff declared that if they would only throw England over, the King of Spain would demand the hand of Henrietta for his brother Don Carlos. Louis XIII., however, refused to listen to this proposal, and replied, that he was as zealous a Catholic as the King of Spain, and that it was on this account that the marriage of his sister encountered delay. When told that Olivarez had declared that in the event of the Pope granting a dispensation, the King of Spain would march upon Rome and sack the city, Marie de Medicis replied, "We shall know how to hinder him."

The Pope after this seems to have become more reasonable, and to have confined his efforts to endeavouring, in conjunction with France, to obtain the best possible terms for the English Catholics. This was the great bone of contention. James, during the negotiation with Spain, had become painfully

aware of the amount of irritation with which the country had regarded the concessions made to Philip. He was himself willing to accord full spiritual liberty to the Catholics; he would pledge his royal word to this, but neither the cardinal nor the Pope would accept a verbal promise, and the consequence was that James, to the great delight of Richelieu, yielded. He consented to give a written engagement, which, in the negotiations which followed, was always spoken of both by French and English negotiators as the *secret escrit*.

At this juncture we find that the cardinal recalled the Comte de Tillières from London, in consequence of the ambassador not being sufficiently active in the matter of the marriage. The count was replaced by the Marquis d'Effiat, who had a very delicate affair to treat with the British monarch. James had undertaken to give an agreement in writing, but he wished this document to be kept secret. The French negotiators, on the other hand, insisted that it should be inserted in the marriage contract, which would have to be submitted to Parliament. The English negotiators refused to hear of this, being well aware that Parliament would never agree to it.

In consequence of this difference of opinion some delay occurred, and it was not until James had put on the screw, and allowed a fresh persecution of Catholics, that negotiations were continued. Louis XIII. having remonstrated, the persecutions ceased, and the French king, on the advice of the cardinal,

consented to give way in the matter of publicity. The secret article was signed, sealed, and delivered on the 7th September, 1624. Both sides appeared satisfied, and the Marquis d'Effiat wrote home that King James had not only given him a seat in his carriage, but had invited him to dine with him in his bedroom, which was a more exceptional favour. In fact, the marquis found his Majesty so affable, that after dinner he endeavoured to persuade him to consent to two further articles, but in this the French ambassador was forced to admit that he was not successful.

The next step on the part of Cardinal Richelieu was to send Père Bérulle to Rome to aid in obtaining the dispensation, and to seek counsel of the Pontiff. The good father was a man of wit and learning, and what was more rare among gentlemen of his cloth who dabbled in diplomacy, entirely devoid of all worldly ambition. He looked for his reward in another life, and this was no doubt a relief and a guarantee to those who enlisted his services. He was to act in concert with the French ambassador, the Comte de Bethune, a Protestant, and a grandson of Sully. The count was to work upon the fears of the Pontiff, and was to endeavour to frighten him into acquiescence with the French demands. He was to be an agent of intimidation. On the other hand, the Père Bérulle was to allay the apprehensions of his Holiness, and was to endeavour to get round him, and to overcome his scruples by means of persuasion. He was to appeal

to his equity and all the loftier feelings, and was to set forth the benefit which would result to the Catholic religion from a speedy settlement of the question in dispute. The Pontiff was to be submitted to a kind of double action. He was to be rubbed up and down ; with and against the grain ; probably with a view of seeing which process was most likely to succeed.

At his first audience with Urban VIII., Père Bérulle read out a long discourse in Latin, in which, together with much that was pregnant and sensible, he did not disdain to indulge in puns. Thus he warned the Pope that the *inclemency* of the last century had driven England into heresy, and he then expressed the hope that the "*urbanity* which reigns in your heart and your actions will remedy the evil."

In reply the Pope expressed himself in favour of an alliance which was to restore England to the giron of the Church. He declared, however, that the question must be submitted to the College of Cardinals, but he promised that he would select cardinals favourable to France. He also insisted that it would be necessary for the Catholic clergy of England to petition him in favour of the match, so that they might not afterwards turn round and blame him when the dispensation had been accorded.

The Spanish cardinals at Rome now intrigued with such success that the Pope hesitated. Knowing nothing of the *secret escrit*, they pointed out to him that England had accorded more advantages to the Catholics when she was treating for the hand

of the Infanta Maria than she now offered to France. Père Bérulle very forcibly explained to the Pontiff that when Spain saw that there was no chance of settling matters with England, or possibly to prevent any settlement, she exacted conditions to which she must have known that England would never consent. If England accepted those conditions at the moment, it was simply with a view of getting Baby Charles and Steenie safely away from Madrid. There is no knowing what effect the arguments of Père Bérulle would have had on the mind of his Holiness had they not been backed up by the other negotiator. The Comte de Bethune now considered it high time to speak out boldly. He declined to argue the matter any longer, and informed the Pope that he had orders to send no more couriers to France until he could forward the dispensation. He was perfectly well aware, he said, that unless he adopted this course the Court of Rome would go on demanding one concession after another, and that the affair would never end. On top of the language used by the Comte de Bethune, the Pope was informed that it had been determined to sign the marriage contract in Paris without waiting for the dispensation, and in fact the contract was signed on the 24th November, 1624. When the news of this event reached Rome, the cardinals, to whom the matter had been referred, at once met and accorded the dispensation.

It was only in the natural order of things that there should be still some vexatious delay while the